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George Will on Gangsters

The Democrats' Get-Rich-Quick Scheme

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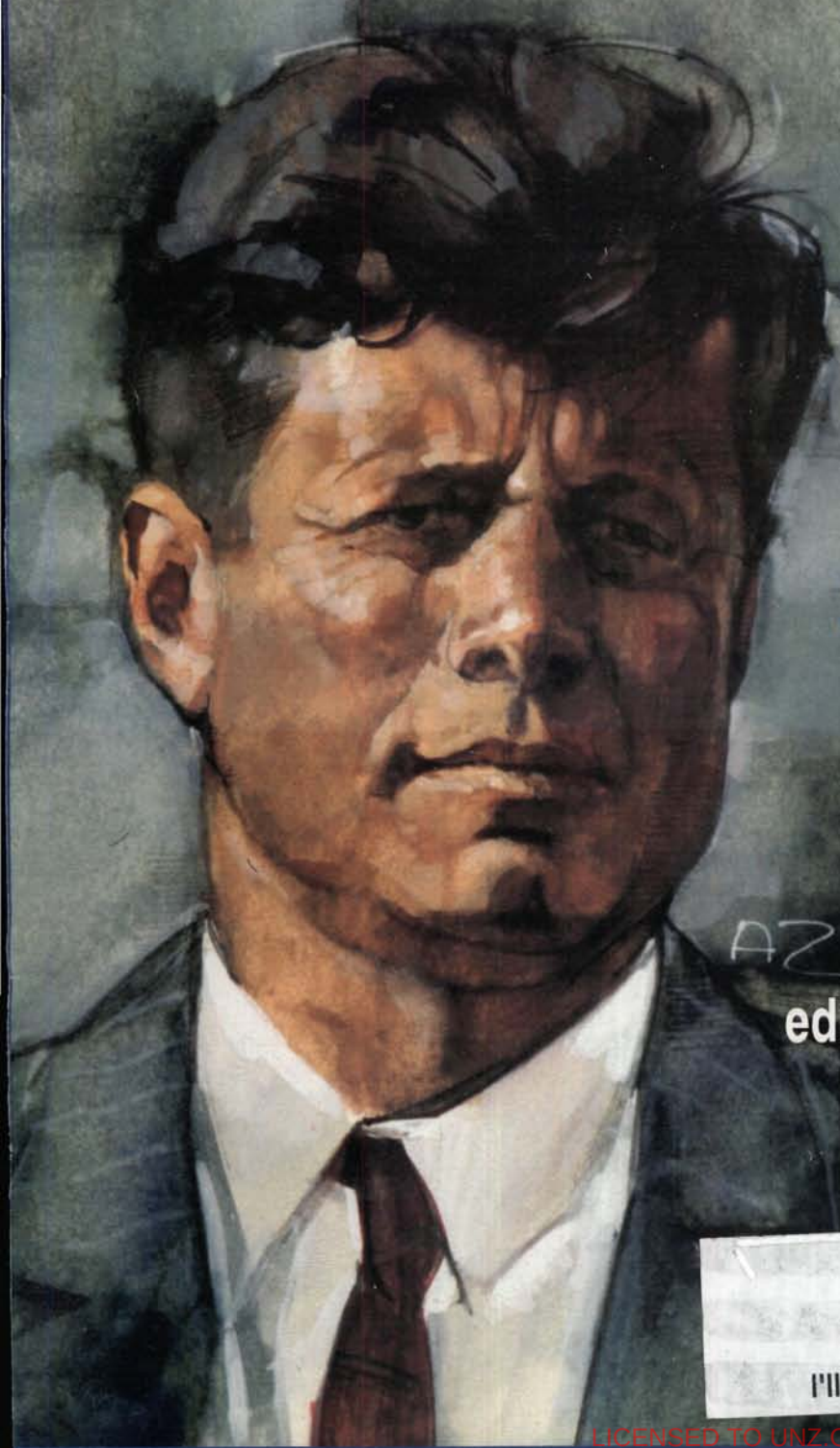

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—*Johnny, we hardly knew ye*

A fresh portrait by a distinguished journalist, edited by Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

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NATIONAL REVIEW

DECEMBER 31, 1994 VOL. XLVI, NO. 25

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Letters

Legacy of Racism?

Pat Shipman's "Legacy of Racism" [Dec. 5] suggests that "the prejudicial treatment of blacks in America during the last two hundred years have [*sic*] been so crippling as to produce a downshift of the mean IQ by some 15 points." While there was de jure racism in the South, and de facto elsewhere, what was actually happening in mostly black schools staffed by mostly black teachers prior to *Brown* v. *Board of Education* and the 1964 Civil Rights Act? Newt Gingrich and Brett Schundler have publicized unambiguous evidence that per-pupil expenditures are often inversely proportional to desired results. How successful were the teachers of 1865 through 1964? After thirty years and trillions of dollars of assistance, are black students better or worse off? Empirically, this country's social engineers were successful in getting huge amounts of money, and some integration, but catastrophically lost everything else. Reading, writing, and computation skills have sharply deteriorated, school and neighborhood safety is often non-existent, the black family structure has statistically been shattered, and while Jesse Jackson equates birth control with racial genocide, teen pregnancies terminate any hope of a bright future for both the mother and the baby.

Prejudicial treatment clearly affected career prospects, but not at all basic educational results, where intuitively "cognitive ability" is most affected by the environment. Without presenting long-term historical IQ-test results, Dr. Shipman's article becomes too reliant on non sequitur and unbelievable conclusions.

Frank Badomi
Brooklyn, N.Y.

By inverting my question, "Could the prejudicial treatment of blacks in America during the last two hundred years have been so crippling as to produce a downshift of the mean IQ by some 15 points?" into a statement, Mr. Badomi has distorted both my grammar and my point. I believe that the pattern of IQ alteration produced by social discrimination might be revealed by analyzing male–female differences, which would in turn help us assess the black–white differences and their cause(s).

Mr. Badomi argues that this is unnecessary, since the failure of "thirty years and trillions of dollars of assistance" to improve the situation tacitly indicates that IQ is not amenable to environmental manipulation. I challenge his expectation that thirty years' effort is long enough to alter IQ scores if intelligence has both an environmental and a genetic component. Since twenty years is a standard generation length in humans, only a truly draconian event could shift the mean of a partially or wholly genetic trait in one and a half generations. The efforts that have been made to improve black education in this country do not constitute such an event.

Likewise, sheer expenditure per pupil is an inadequate measure. Males and females in U.S. public schools enjoy identical resources; they are taught in the same classrooms and laboratories by the same teachers, simultaneously. Why then do female and male IQs (and levels of professional success) differ? And why do all-female colleges produce a disproportionate number of achievers in a wide range of disciplines? I conclude that some social environments are less effective venues for educating females than others. Understanding this situation (where gene pools are identical but sex varies) may yield insights into how and to what extent the mean IQ of the black population could have been affected by a hostile social environment. I think Murray and Herrnstein should have explored this avenue of research, not to save me the trouble of doing it myself, but because this is one of the best ways to test—and therefore strengthen or refute—their fundamental argument. —PS

"Just remember, I'm Santa Claus, not Donald Trump."

Population Squabbles

Peter Brimelow believes that nineteenth-century Ireland suffered disaster because of excessive population [Books, Arts & Manners, Oct. 24]. He seems to think this is uncontroversial, but as economic historians are belatedly recognizing, it is incorrect. (See, for example, Joel Mokyr's *Why Ireland Starved.*) The real problem was the insecurity of property, stemming largely from Irish resistance to the attempted imposition of British rule. As a result of this insecurity, capitalists refused to invest in Ireland and the Industrial Revolution did not materialize.

Perhaps 1.5 million Irish died of starvation, and this is recognized as the last large-scale demographic disaster to strike Europe. But the potato blight, which triggered it, also struck Belgium, the Netherlands, and Scotland, with little demographic effect. Then there is the inconvenient point that England was itself more densely populated than Ireland when the famine struck. In the mid nineteenth century, cultivated acres per capita were 1.65 in Ireland, 1.50 in England and Wales.

Thomas Malthus himself identified the real culprit. There was a serious shortage of capital, but what explained that? "There is indeed a fatal deficiency in one of the greatest sources of prosperity," he wrote, "the perfect security of property."

Tom Bethell
Washington, D.C.

I'm afraid my old friend Tom Bethell has missed the point: human die-offs have occurred when population growth outstrips contemporary institutions. *I'm sure he's correct about property rights, but that's as anachronistic as saying the problem would have been solved by more McDonald's restaurants. Similarly, I'm (almost) sure the optimists are correct that the earth can support limitless numbers of people. But that still leaves plenty of room for nasty accidents on the way.* —PB

No Special-Interest Caucus

You made reference to the Congressional Black Caucus ["The Week," Nov. 21] and suggested that Representative Gary Franks form a Republican Black Caucus.

Have you considered that the concept of a Black Caucus is wrong at the core? I have never understood how conservatives could let such a thing stand unopposed.

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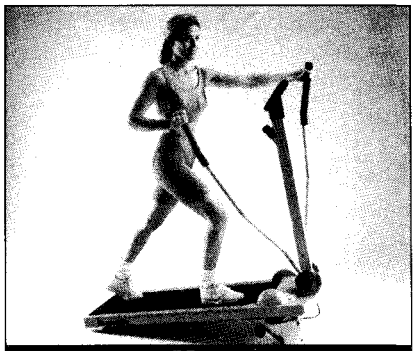

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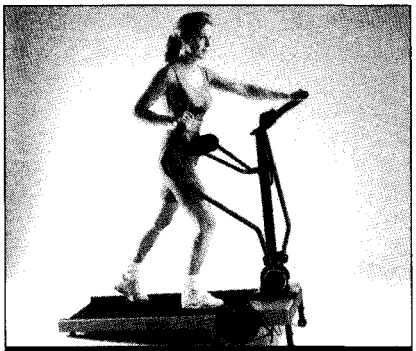

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The idea that congressmen should join together for the purpose of taking positions based on color is just plain racist. (Sorry to use a favorite PC epithet, but there's no better word.)

I would like to ask you to examine the concept of caucus based on race, and try to convince Representative Franks and Representative-elect Watts to distance themselves from any such thing. I believe that you should—in your usual logical fashion—challenge the Black Caucus to justify itself, or disband.

John F. Brinson
Allentown, Pa.

Silver Screen on the Right

I was delighted to peruse the list of "The 100 Best Conservative Movies" by Spencer Warren [Oct. 24]. For what it's worth I offer the following titles to add to the list: *Patton*—remarkable because it depicted a prominent military figure with virtue and honor in a film produced during the Vietnam War. *Dirty Harry*—Clint Eastwood provided a public-relations tour de force for the NRA, critics of liberal judicial bureaucrats, and Magnum pistols. *Summer of '42*—proves that teenagers *can* demonstrate virtues while battling their hormones. *La Dolce Vita*—Federico Fellini's take on the spiritual emptiness of life devoted to hedonism.

Justin Levine
Playa Del Rey, Calif.

Where is *The Sound of Music*? It is pro-religion (the nuns are pious, chaste, and human); it is pro-family (Captain von Trapp's six children are a blessing, not a curse); it is pro-culture (the family is dignified, educated, and self-restrained); it is patriotic (von Trapp loves his country and thus despises the Anschluss). The movie shows staunch opposition to collectivist doctrine and practice. It ends with a soaring tribute to true liberty.

Rev. Michael J. Phillips
Fremont, Calif.

The essence of liberalism is its denial of original sin and a faith in the powers of the state to eradicate evil by force. The conservative response has been to expose the morally entropic destructiveness of statism and articulate the need to appreciate that the quality of a civilization is measured by the moral courage of its individual people intuitively responding to a natural law. Considering the historical and artistic imagination required to illustrate natual law, how could you leave *Judgment at Nuremberg* off the list?

Edward J. Baker
Flushing, N.Y.

The Red Badge of Courage—for once a movie was as great as the book. *The Searchers*—this panoramic story of the frontier gives a scalding portrayal of the cost of bringing civilization to a wilderness. John Wayne's character, which becomes almost a mirror image of Scar, the Comanche chief, shows how one can be corrupted by a savage environment. On the other hand, the preacher shows how a man can wage war and still remain decent and uphold basic Christian values.

Thomas J. Mullen Jr.
Flemington, N.J.

One oversight was *My Son John,* starring Helen Hayes and Dean Jagger as the all-American parents, undeservedly cursed with a Red son (Robert Walker in unfortunately his last role).

Unrepentantly conservative, its unambiguous defense of family, faith, and freedom make it a great anti-Communist film; but just as delightful is its clear swipe at all smug, condescending intellectuals eager to deconstruct the older simpler virtues and traditions of the American people.

Particularly memorable is the plight of the bewildered parents slowly and inexorably coming to realize the worst of their clever son. Helen Hayes's performance as the pious and simple mother facing the shame of her son's treachery is heartbreaking, a melodramatic feat, culminating in an unforgettable final confrontation.

All "conservatives of the heart" will find the film a guaranteed pleasure. Not the greatest film ever made, but perhaps the most conservative great film.

Trent Square
Toronto, Ont.

Please add *my* favorite film to your list—*Captains Courageous*. This film is excellent in many ways. It unashamedly hails the importance of faith. It stresses the importance of a father to a son. It shows how hard work—no matter how menial—builds character. This is a beautiful film!

Kathleen Redmond
Kalamazoo, Mich.

Best picture depicting the evils of Communism (and Fascism): *The Third Man,* Sir Carol Reed's dark and blistering attack on a world of dying innocence, increasing artificiality, and the cult of Big Brotherhood. Great direction, great acting, great music, great atmosphere, great suspense—just plain great!

Best picture celebrating family life: *Life with Father*. A witty, warm, and wonderful film. Michael Curtiz's direction was first-rate, as were the screenplay, cinematography, costume design—and ah! —William Powell and Irene Dunne, the original Dream Team. Perhaps you have something against red-headed, heterosexual, capitalist, Euro-centric men. Me, I love them.

Mary M. Gaydos
New York, N.Y.

A little-known film, which should rank with *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* in typifying the American spirit, is *Stand Alone*. This is the story of a young man in World War II who takes out a group of enemies in the Pacific single-handedly, is decorated a hero, and finds himself some forty years later a fat, out-of-condition grandpa, consigned to a lackluster existence. He observes a drug killing, refuses to be intimidated by the druggies, and ultimately creates his own "killing ground" complete with the American flag at full mast. Heroes never cease being heroes; they just get older. If this doesn't teach kids what it's all about, I don't know what would.

Thomas G. Wallace
Riverside, Calif.

Under the category "Pictures to Make the Patriotic Blood Boil" I thought *Patton* would be a given. General Patton is, as his nickname indicates, the type of "blood and guts" soldier that should make every conservative stand and cheer. The performances of George C. Scott and Karl Malden are riveting. If for no other reason than the line, "I won't drink with you or any other Russian son of a bitch," *Patton* should be included.

Douglas R. Heye
Clemmons, N.C.

Rebel Without a Cause may not sound too conservative, but James Dean's character rebels against the refusal of his peers and his parents to take responsibility for their actions. He especially wants his weak, indulgent father to act more "paternalistic." A longing for tradition and family runs strong throughout this film.

Jim Johnston
Summit, Miss.

Newt Beginnings

The recent elections confirm this proverb: "A wise man will abandon the Foley of his ways and chart a Newt course."

Bob Hageman
Wayzata, Minn.

The New Deal is dead. Long live the Newt Deal!

William Bauman
Beverly Hills, Calif.

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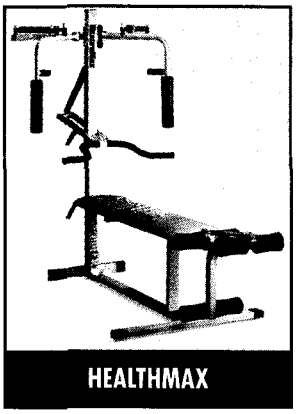
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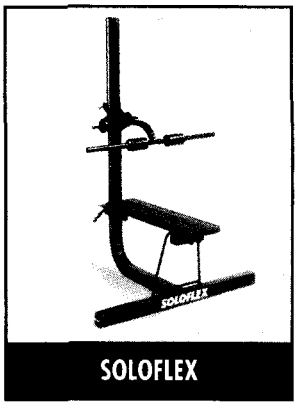
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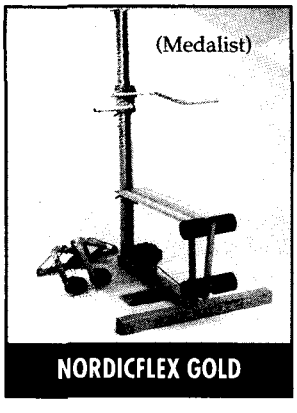
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FROM THE EDITOR

Song of Songs

■ Watching President Clinton at the Budapest summit, I was struck by a sudden fear. We had not reported on our contest for a popular song about Mr. Clinton's foreign policy.

This had been prompted by Jeffrey Stambovsky, who sent me an hilarious parody of the Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby":

Hillary Clinton
Picks up a check
From a broker who might be a thief,
Buys some more beef. (etc.)

About sixty entries rolled in. Almost all of them were a credit to the literary skills of our readers. Those based on the pre-rock-'n'-roll classics—Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hart, Jerome Kern, Frank Loesser—were by and large funnier than the rock parodies. Why? I suspect that the earlier songs, being closer in spirit to light verse, may simply work better on the printed page. Also, rock lyrics tend to be direct and sentimental rather than complex and sophisticated, so that the parody inevitably shares in these qualities.

Take the parody of John Lennon's "Imagine" by *Village Voice* columnist Ellen Willis (evoked by *NR*, but published in her own column):

Imagine North Korea
Shelving its nuclear plan,
The Tutsis friends with Hutus
And Rushdie with Iran,
The politics of meaning spread
throughout the land.
Oh, you may say I'm no leader,
And you're not the only one.
Still I hope someday you'll love me
'Cause that's what makes Bill
Clinton run.

This is as much a satire of Lennon's fatheadedness as it is of Clinton's cynicism. And Lennon's meandering original blunts the sharp sting in the tail of Miss Willis's parody.

Now for the winners. An honorable mention for Steve Bradstreet's variation on Ellington's "Sophisticated Lady" that was metrically precise and had one especially nice couplet: *Poor goof, emasculated Billy, in truth / You miss the lost cocksureness of youth.*

Dr. Daniel Katz takes third with an almost unaltered Sinatra standard:

Call me irresponsible,
Call me unreliable,
Throw in undependable too.
Do my foolish alibis bore you?
Well, I'm not too clever;
Just ask Al Gore, ooh . . .

This also included the wonderful line: *Serbs I'm not inclined to pursue.*

Second comes Ben Pendleton's take-off on Leonard Bernstein's "Maria":

Korea!
They've just launched the nukes from
Korea!
And suddenly (a shame)
There's no one left to blame
But me.
Korea!
They'll never stop saying "Korea."

The winner is a parody of Loesser's "The Oldest Established Permanent Floating Crap Game in New York":

Why it's good old reliable Clinton,
Resolute Commander-in-Chief.
If a crisis develops
In some far-off spot
He'll send the Marines in; then again
maybe not.
Any ally who's counting on Clinton
Would be wise to purchase a hearse.
He's the virtual second coming of
Jimmy Carter only worse.

We've got friends who need us
everywhere, everywhere,
Where there's not much freedom in
the air.
But his boys at Foggy Bottom don't
appear to know we've got 'em there.

Meanwhile troops who take orders
from Clinton
Now are free to carry a purse.
He's the virtual second coming of
Jimmy Carter only worse.

The author? Mr. Stambovsky, who wins the usual bottle of bubbly. Cheers!

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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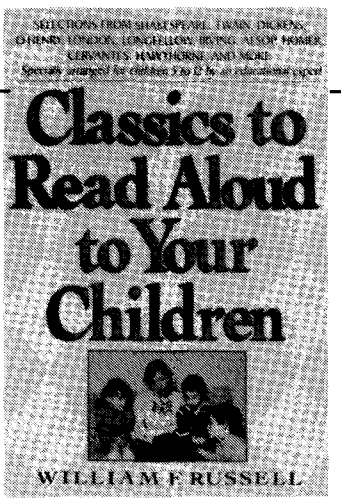

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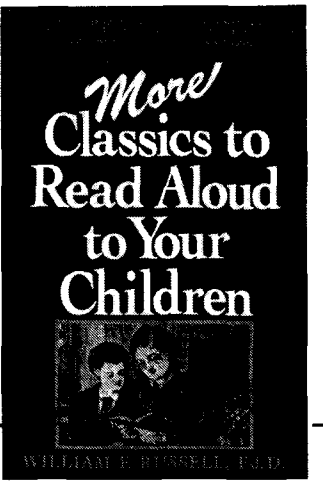

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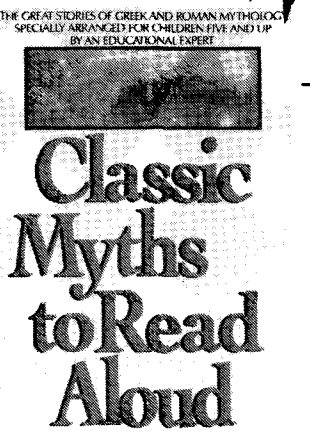
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FOR THE RECORD

■ A month and a half after election, big question in D.C. salons: Can **Clinton** hold on? Times-Mirror poll shows 66 per cent of Dems hoping for '96 primary challenger to Prez. "In 1996, the economy will not be as good, the President will be on the ballot, and we could have a wipeout," says Dem. consultant **Ted Van Dyck**. Van Dyck told *Washington Times* correspondent **Don Lambro** he's receiving "dozens of calls" from other Dems thanking him for candor. Clinton in "*Et tu, Brute*" mood after comment by Rep. **Patricia Schroeder** (D., Colo.): "It's been a very bad last year and a half" and Prez might just let VP **Gore** run. Also, ultra-liberal, ever-apoplectic *New York Times* columnist **Anthony Lewis** cites Administration's "weakness" and "vacuity," calls it "empty of vision," "without a design," and describes Clinton as "a dwindling haunting presence in the White House." . . . A factor in such speculation: Democratic Party's post-election debt is $5 million—five times greater than in three prior midterm elections. . . . Bigger factor: Washington insiders realize **John Dean**–like implications of former Associate Attorney General **Webster Hubbell**'s plea bargain with Whitewater Special Counsel **Kenneth Starr.** A Rose Law Firm honcho with **Hillary** in Little Rock days when both were enmeshed in Whitewater–Madison Guaranty dealings, Hubbell would have knowledge of any White House attempts to influence Arkansas U.S. Attorney and federal Resolution Trust Corp. (RTC) investigations into wrongdoing by S&L. Most startling recent disclosure: columnist **Bob Tyrrell** reports Hubbell's fraudulent bills to RTC in Eighties were approved by RTC official **April Breslaw**, who has acknowledged this "prior relation." Breslaw is RTC official who told RTC investigators to leave Clinton tie to Madison out of probe. RTC chief **Jack Ryan**—who looked like man with much on his conscience during Whitewater hearings last summer—may want to unburden himself to new Senate Banking Chairman **Alfonse D'Amato** (R., N.Y.) and new House Banking Chairman **Jim Leach** (R., Iowa) before next round of hearings.

■ GOP take over of Wisconsin legislature has national impact as Republicans appoint State Rep. **Polly Williams**, a black Democrat, to head Urban Education Committee. Williams, who four years ago joined with Gov. **Tommy Thompson** to create school-voucher pilot program, looking to expand the program, gridlocked by Dem. legislature. . . . Teachers-union leader **Al Shanker** sounding like **Bill Bennett**—Shanker bemoans the fact colleges now teaching what high schools once taught and criticizes new federal guidelines on teaching modern history, which don't even mention post-WWII Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe. . . . Yale and its President **Richard C. Levin** in a dither after revelations that Yale misappropriated $20-million gift to enhance Western-civilization courses. Investigation by student reporter **Pat Collins**, in campus conservative paper *Light and Truth* (project assisted by Intercollegiate Studies Institute), has received *Wall Street Journal, New York Times* coverage.

■ Juicy lead item in recent *New York Post* "Page Six" gossip column: **David Brock**, in new *American Spectator* investigative piece, "mauls" *Strange Justice*, the pro-**Anita Hill** book by *Wall Street Journal* reporters **Jane Mayer** and **Jill Abramson.** *Strange Justice*—featured in hour-long smear of **Clarence Thomas** on ABC News *Turning Point* in October—cited witnesses who said Thomas had pin-ups in apartment, rented X-rated videos, and made off-color jokes on job. *Post* reports that the witnesses told Brock they never said this. . . . Houghton-Mifflin editor-in-chief **John Sterling** playing defense after Brock's charges his company (publisher of *Strange Justice*) printed "fake evidence, doctored quotes, and unsupported hearsay." Expecting only to disagree over interpretation of Hill–Thomas controversy, Brock said he was astonished to find *Strange Justice* amounts to "one of the most outrageous journalistic hoaxes in recent memory." . . . Meanwhile, conservative activists continuing probe into which ABC News executive was responsible for *Turning Point*'s puff-piece by reporter **Michel McQueen**, who declined even to interview Brock for show on Mayer–Abramson book. Stay tuned.

■ Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman **Shen Guofang** growled at Hanoi over its recent hint to Adm. **Richard C. Macke** that Vietnam might let U.S. ships use Cam Rahn Bay facility. . . . Likely Chinese power brokers in any struggle following death of ailing 90-year-old Paramount Leader **Deng Xiaoping**: not just Pres. **Jiang Zemin** but also—proving China is still China—his fellow octogenarians and military big-wigs Adm. **Liu Huaqing** and Gen. **Zhang Zhen**. . . . Unrepentant **Irmgard Moeller**, convicted of killing three GIs with a car bomb in 1972, released from Berlin jail Dec. 1 on suspended sentence. . . . Hope on revision of ABM Treaty as newly elected Sen. **Jon Kyl** (R., Ariz.) says GOP will push Clinton to revise position, build "robust missile defenses" and stop catering to **Boris Yeltsin** and his resurgent Russkies.

■ *Washington Times*'s **John McCaslin** uncharitably retrieved Jan. 29, 1993, quote from **Babs**-the-leftist **Streisand** shortly after warbling at Clinton inaugural: "How do you Republicans feel now that you've lost everything and are all losers?"

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Are Catholics Dumb?

There's a tenacious myth in America that says Catholics are ignorant, dumb, and indolent. Sadly, the way so many Catholics have surrendered Catholic doctrines, morality, and discipline, and have let themselves be run over by decadent American culture, it almost seems as if the myth were true! Why don't Catholics stand up for the Faith? Are they cowards? Are they so weak of mind and character that they must let others tell them what to do and think? If that's the price of "making it" in America, the price is way too high.

In recent years the papacy has, in the face of pathetic groaning and howling, been giving the Church renewed definition and purpose. Traditional morality and doctrine have been vigorously reasserted. Converts are being attracted again. Truly, a new wind is blowing. But the Holy See needs our support, especially given the potent opposition of the cultural elites. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, a Catholic monthly magazine, refuse to be cowed: We stand with the papacy and Magisterium. Understandably, *Newsweek* finds us "cheeky." Founded in 1977, we take our name from the 19th-century Oxford Movement in England, and, like its most celebrated product, John Henry Newman, we're aggressively intellectual. We challenge our adversaries on their own turf.

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If you're a Catholic who's unwilling to play the idiotic copycat, to be a wind-up toy for the secular media, to betray the Faith for a pat on the head, we're for you. If you're looking for an effective and heartening antidote to dissent and decay, give us a try!

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THE WEEK

■ The Post Office has modified its planned mushroom-cloud stamp commemorating the end of World War II. The stamp will show a different bomb: a copy of the Democrats' 1994 election strategy.

■ Sixty-six per cent of Democrats, according to a Times-Mirror poll, want someone to challenge Bill Clinton in the 1996 primaries. Informal soundings suggest that 97 per cent of Republicans want him to hang in there.

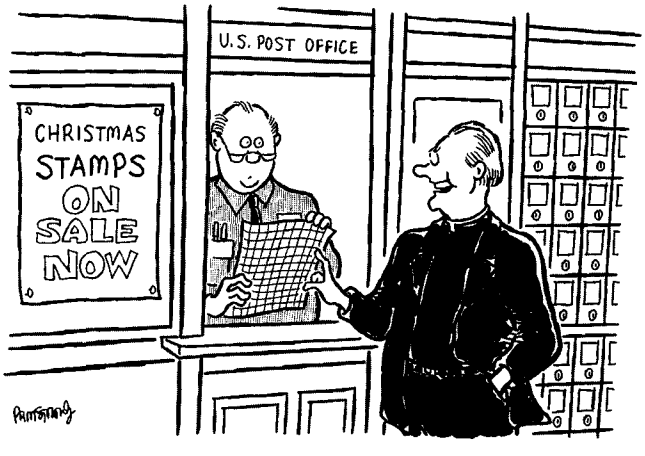
■ The term-limits movement has hit something of a crisis point. It is conceivable that in the weeks ahead it will see state-imposed term limits rejected by the Supreme Court and a term-limits constitutional amendment rejected by the U.S. Congress. On top of this comes a dispute between the organization U.S. Term Limits and some of its Republican allies in Congress over whether an amendment should impose a three- or six-term limit on members of the House. Republicans such as Representative Bill McCollum (Fla.) say six is fine, while U.S. Term Limits insists anything more than three is a betrayal. The debate has divisive potential—especially if term-limits activists decide to try to take down GOP supporters of a six-term limit—out of all proportion to its substantive importance. The less stringent limit is a welcome mark of caution in undertaking a reform that, as term-limit supporters like to say, would fundamentally change an institution of the U.S. Government. Besides, when the poster boy for term limits is no longer Dan Rostenkowski, but Newt Gingrich, some temporizing may be in order.

■ THEY STILL DON'T GET IT DEPT. About-to-be Minority Whip David Bonior, contemplating the prospect that even some Democrats who survived November 8 would have to give up cherished House committee posts: "If our caucus decides that these ratios are piggish . . . we may have to go to the mat." And about-to-be Minority Leader Richard Gephardt: By restructuring committees, Republicans are "smothering the voice of the American voters."

■ On the December 4 *Meet the Press*, Newt Gingrich said "a senior law-enforcement official" had told him that "up to a quarter of the White House staff, when they first came in, had used drugs in the preceding four or five years." Decrying Republican tactics of "smear and innuendo," Chief of Staff Leon Panetta called the charge "absolutely false." But the estimate Mr. Gingrich quoted is quite plausible. In the 1991 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 18.4 per cent of respondents between the ages of 26 and 34 said they had used an illegal drug in the last year. Since that figure is based on self-reportings, it is probably on the low side. Given the youthfulness of the White House staff, "up to a quarter" is a reasonable stab at the proportion who have sampled forbidden chemicals in recent years. And the survey data suggest that not one-quarter but a majority have used illegal drugs (primarily marijuana) at some point. Nevertheless, the Clintonites continue to pursue a war on drugs that fines and imprisons people for engaging in or facilitating what most of them used to consider recreation.

■ The cruelest aspect of this war is the ban on medical marijuana. Notwithstanding that marijuana has a variety of therapeutic applications, including relief of pain and nausea, appetite stimulation, and the treatment of glaucoma, the Federal Government has long opposed making the drug available to patients, citing a need for well-controlled clinical studies. Researchers in San Francisco have spent a couple of years developing a plan for such a study and getting it approved by all the relevant authorities. They propose to test the effectiveness of marijuana in treating the wasting syndrome associated with AIDS. But the Drug Enforcement Administration has apparently contrived to get the National Institute on Drug Abuse to withhold the necessary marijuana from the government's farm in Mississippi. You might expect that people who have had some experience with marijuana's remarkable safety compared to other drugs would be inclined to reverse such an irrational policy. Perhaps they're too busy denying their own past.

■ Stan Greenberg is the Clinton pollster and ideologist whose aim it was in 1992 to discredit Reaganism forever by re-addicting the American middle class to



"Oh, and give me one of those secular stamps, too—I feel a little reckless today."

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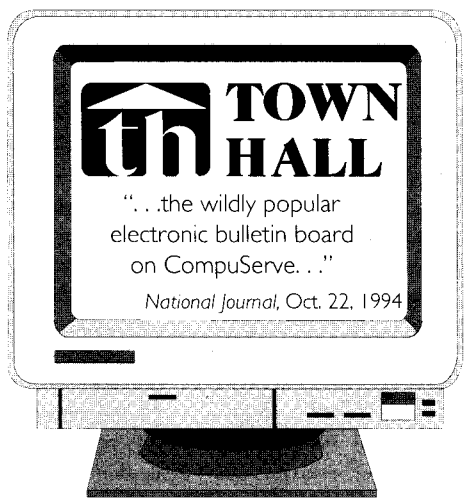

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■ Notice to Our Readers: This is the last issue of 1994. The first issue of 1995 will be printed January 4—three weeks hence, rather than the usual two. Merry Christmas, and a happy New Year.

government programs. His new book, *Middle Class Dreams: The Politics of the American Majority,* was circulated in page proofs with breathless back-cover hype about how Greenberg "knows what makes voters tick" and how President Clinton had a chance to "forge a new partisan realignment." STOP! After November 8 came a press release from Times Books announcing that publication would be "delayed" due to "significant new analyses" the author was adding.

■ Supporters of the 53-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) now face the impossible task of justifying last week's shambolic summit in Budapest. Piqued by the refusal of other countries to endorse their plans for making the CSCE the keystone of Europe's new security architecture, and angered by the U.S. initiative to accelerate the expansion of NATO, the Russians fought tooth and nail to block a resolution condemning Serbian aggression in former Yugoslavia. They fought and they won: the 56-page summit declaration contains not a single reference to the violent partition of a member-state, Bosnia–Herzegovina. Was this fatal to the CSCE's credibility? Not in the short run. The "Conference" is now to become an "Organization," its hitherto quite loose structures are to be tightened, and there is more and more talk about an "economic dimension" (i.e., handouts) to assist countries in transition. Charged at the end of the Cold War with bringing the two halves of the continent together, the CSCE has in reality done little except confer legitimacy on dubious post-Communist bullies. If the Russians' obstinacy in Budapest helped dig the grave of this forum, we might yet have cause to be grateful to them.

■ The *Achille Lauro* has finally gone down into the sea. In 1961, she collided with a fishing boat and killed a Neapolitan fisherman. In 1981, she caught fire in the Canary Islands, and two passengers died. In 1985, she was hijacked by terrorists and a wheelchair-bound hostage was murdered. Was this, then, a doomed ship, whose crew once brought down some great albatross off the African coast? Who knows? On the other hand, she had seen the world.

■ This much is not in dispute about Tupac Shakur's encounter with the 19-year-old fan who later accused the rapper of sexual assault. The two met at a Manhattan club, where the woman voluntarily performed oral sex on him. Several days later, he invited her up to his hotel suite, where she fellated him and one of his friends. Mr. Shakur at some point also grabbed her buttocks. But while he pronounced the said interaction to be consensual, she said it was coerced. On December 1 a jury split the difference, acquitting Mr. Shakur of sodomy (the allegedly forced fellatio) but convicting him of sexual abuse (the grab). Thus, the verdict implied that even if a woman willingly performed oral sex on a man, if he then grabs her buttocks, she has been assaulted. Arrest John Wilkes Booth for disturbing the peace.

■ During the 1980s, the once-lovely Church of England, despite its longtime stand on the indissolubility of marriage, struggled thrice over the issue of remarriage, and a compromise was forged: leave it up to the local vicar. But in Gooderstone, England, the issue has become the remarriage of the vicar himself. The Reverend Kit Chalcraft, already twice divorced, has been warned by his bishop that he faces dismissal if he goes through with a planned third marriage; such a man, the bishop says, "can in no way bear witness effectively to Christian standards of marriage." Chalcraft's flock, though, is not of one voice with the bishop. "If you disregard his marital circumstances," says one member, "which are not ideal, he's a caring, compassionate man." "Henry VIII had six wives," says another. "If a fellow does a good job, that's what it's all about." Given the origins of the Anglican Church, the guy's got a point. "As a church we must face the realities of contemporary life," the visionary vicar says, "or else we cause people to suffer a lot of guilt." Heaven forfend.

■ For 22 years the United Way's founder and longtime leader William Aramony lived like a multi-millionaire, paying for luxury condos, various girlfriends, and executive jets out of the money sent in by millions of donors. He is now using the same imaginative brilliance in court, claiming he was "incapable of having criminal intent" since his judgment was hampered by "brain atrophy." Mr. Aramony's attorney conceded that "everybody's brain atrophies." So here we have new grounds for the defense of anyone over the age of about 16.

■ The Media Research Center's 1994 compilation of

Undeck the Halls

Hold the holly, here comes Jesse.
Bill is up to here with Helms, fa-la.
Jesse scares like Scotland's Nessie.
(No one's in the mood for fa-la-la.)
Jesse drives the Mrs. batty.
Everyone, FA-LA-LA, LA-LA-LA.
Now the halls and walls look ratty.
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

W. H. VON DREELE

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humorous quotations from the news is guaranteed to make you cry. Consider Robert Wright's non-sequiturs: "One standard conservative argument against anti-poverty policies is their cost: taxes burden the affluent and thus, by lowering work incentives, reduce economic output. But if one goal of the policy is to bolster monogamy, then making the affluent less so would help. . . . The relative wealth of the rich is what lures a young woman to a wealthy married . . . man [and] what makes the man . . . feel too good for just one wife." So, raise taxes and you get "more stable marriages, fewer divorces, fewer abused children, and less loneliness and depression." Or Nina Totenberg's local color: "He [Clinton] was there in the middle of the desert," she said. "I mean, it was biblical!" But the gold medal goes to David A. Kaplan for these sentences in a story from Lillehammer: "Around the global village, women cheered and grown men wept. At his press conference, [speed skater Dan] Jansen paused to take a call from the President, the man who's made America safe again for tears."

■ President Clinton's post-election "turn to the center" evidently came too late to reverse the invitation to fellow-traveling folk singer Pete Seeger to be a Kennedy Center honoree. The President heaped praise on Seeger as "an inconvenient artist who dared to sing things as he saw them." Clinton did not ask Seeger to sing "The Ballad of John Doe," the anti-war ditty he wrote during the Hitler–Stalin pact (no doubt, to spare him any inconvenience).

■ Vice President Al Gore sent out a letter apologizing for his embarrassing "extra chromosome" jibe at Oliver North supporters, saying he had "learned an important lession [*sic*]." Not in spelling.

■ Peter Levine, a research scholar at the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy, has figured out the election returns and reports his findings in a letter to the *New York Times*: "Republicans won this year not because they achieved record support among any class of voters, but because rich people voted . . . in droves." That's the best news about Bill Clinton yet: despite two years of him there are still tens of millions of rich people.

■ THE WAY WE LIVE NOW DEPT. In the men's room at the Officers' Club at West Point, there is a Koala Bear Kare Baby Changing Station.

■ ERRATUM: Last issue, in praising the House Republican Study Committee, we mentioned that it had been founded by Ed Feulner and Paul Weyrich. We should have added Representative Phil Crane (Ill.).

■ If Newt Gingrich wants liberal support for orphanages, all he has to do is call them "extended day care."

■ It's great to see cooperation between business and government, with Detroit churning out cars and former members of the Clinton Administration making license plates for them.

Welfare Reform

LIKE STOUT Cortez gazing at the Pacific, congressional Republicans are contemplating the hitherto impossible: the end of most of the welfare portion of the New Deal/Great Society. "Devolution" is the rallying cry of those on the cutting edge. Forget overhauling the federal welfare system; send the whole mess back to the states. Traditionally the rap against devolution has been that governors don't want it. But in a December 8 meeting with their Capitol Hill counterparts, Governors John Engler (Mich.) and William Weld (Mass.) said that not only would they be willing to accept the additional responsibility, they'd spend fewer federal dollars in the process. This would make it possible to bundle up the roughly 330 different welfare programs now administered by the Federal Government into a handful of block grants. The grants would go to the states with (almost) no strings attached. The entire package, which runs about $125 billion a year, might be scaled back, for now, to $100 billion. Welfare reform, federalism, and deficit reduc- tion—all in one package.

What's striking about the latest GOP talk on welfare reform is how much middle ground it affords between conservatives and moderates. The leading "moderate" proposal has been that of Senator Nancy Kassebaum (Kan.), who wants to hand Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Food Stamps, and the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program back to the states in exchange for exclusive federal control over Medicaid. The particulars of Senator Kassebaum's plan are troubling; the cost of Medicaid dwarfs—by about $30 billion a year—the cost of the programs going to the states. But she is on the same broad wavelength as the devolutionists. The internal GOP welfare debate need not, any more, be about whether to undertake moderate or conservative social engineering, but about how to end it at the federal level entirely.

Bill Bennett is talking about ending federal welfare programs, rebating to the states the taxes that were collected to pay for them, and letting the governors start their own programs from scratch. This is the cleanest and most consistent approach to welfare reform. But if it's not politically practical, the argument becomes whether "strings" should be attached to welfare block grants. Since the Federal Government would still be involved in welfare, this seems only reasonable. Conservatives such as Representatives Jim Talent (Mo.) and Tim Hutchinson (Ark.) are likely to insist on some such restrictions—a provision to cut off

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payments to young, unwed mothers topping the list. As William Weld remarked in that December 8 meeting, this may be micromanagement, but at least it's "conservative micromanagement."

But, of course, compared to the current system it's nothing of the sort. The Heritage Foundation–inspired Talent–Faircloth bill takes 65 welfare programs with 10,000 pages of regulations and boils them down to one block grant with a short set of guiding principles. A copy of the AFDC portion of the Social Security Act showing how it would look under a block-grant approach had about 80 per cent of its text crossed out. This is radical change, and there's a feeling among reformers in the House that the GOP leadership there is strong enough to push it through to passage. The bigger question is the Senate, where Majority Leader Bob Dole has a weakness for programs like Food Stamps and moderates like Nancy Kassebaum will have an urge to blink. They must realize, when it comes to welfare, how ready Americans are for a new deal.

UN Out of Bosnia

THE BRITISH and French troops in Bosnia, supposedly there as "peacekeepers," are an obstacle to any sensible policy. Whenever anyone has suggested a more forceful military action that might improve the situation on the ground, our allies have objected that it would compromise the "neutrality" of their peacekeeping presence and invite Serb retaliation against their boys. Of course, the British and French have *not* been neutral; their humanitarian relief of Muslim areas is a palliative, while their diplomacy and their veto of more decisive military action have served the interests of the Serb aggressors.

Because of increasing violence and the possibility that the U.S. might finally lift the arms embargo that prevents Bosnians from defending themselves, Britain and France began to talk about pulling out. They asked for military cover, and the Clinton Administration pledged up to 25,000 U.S. troops. Some form of U.S. military support for the operation would have been worth while to get our allies out. Alas, the Administration lost heart once again; it backed away from its talk of lifting the arms embargo, and our allies promptly backed away from their talk of withdrawal.

The Republicans, meanwhile, have staked out a more honorable position. Bob Dole and Newt Gingrich have laid out a coherent alternative policy, which includes removing the "peacekeepers," arming the Bosnians, and threatening the use of U.S. air power as a strategic deterrent against the Serbs. It's not too late for such a policy to work.

One grave strategic consequence of Administration bungling is the threat to the continued viability of NATO. Allied respect for the U.S. has sunk to a new low, as in turn has our influence over our allies. Worse yet, support for NATO in this country is suffering. Already, William Safire, Bob Dole, and others have hinted at "punishing" our allies by cutting U.S. support for NATO after all this is over. That would be a serious mistake. The alliance is a vital strategic interest of the United States, indeed an extension of American power (the French have long resented it for that very reason). We need the alliance as a counterbalance to a resurgent Russia and as a reassuring framework for a newly powerful Germany. The Central Europeans' desperate eagerness to join is the most eloquent testimony to NATO's geopolitical and moral necessity.

For the long term, we and the Western Europeans need each other, even if the cynical performance of all sides in the Bosnia fiasco tempts one to think that we deserve each other too.

The Vultures Gather

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
  Whitewater's getting hairy.
A friend of Bill's will hit high C
  As Mr. Starr's canary;
While in the House, Jim Leach awaits
  As Al D'Amato salivates,
And Kerrey eyes primary states
  Like a voluptuary.

W. H. VON DREELE

Scrooge Redivivus?

WHEN Newt Gingrich suggested that children of poor, single, abusive mothers might be better off in orphanages, liberals acted as if they had seen the Ghost of Ebenezer Scrooge. Hillary Clinton called the thought "unbelievable and absurd," the President called it "dead wrong," and editorialists dusted off their Dickens. The flap shows, yet again, how badly liberals want to make Gingrich into a counter-icon, a Republican Joycelyn Elders. More important, it shows how unwilling they are to think freshly about social pathology, or their own policies.

Mr. Gingrich's comment was no random blurt, but an idea well in the mainstream of recent discussions of poverty and social breakdown. To cite two examples: Barbara Dafoe Whitehead's article, "Dan Quayle Was Right," examining the effects of family break-up on children, and Gertrude Himmelfarb's study of how Victorian reformers—as distinguished from Victorian novelists—went about their business (the answer: unsentimentally). The emerging consensus is that social policy has ignored the developmental needs of chil-

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dren. The safety net has been woven to support single mothers. But children need more than a family-assistance check if they are to escape joining the next generation of the hopeless. "Governments don't raise children," President Clinton said, "parents do." But if the parent is a teenage drug addict whose boyfriend beats her children, then she is not raising them to anything but woe, and an institution becomes a desirable alternative.

The debate is not between those who have compassion and those who lack it. Liberal "compassion" has fostered an underclass, locked into urban bantustans. The only beneficiaries are the Democratic congressmen they dependably return to office. If talking about reforming this system is heartless, then Bill Clinton is the chief offender. It was he who promised in the 1992 campaign to end "welfare as we know it," a promise he failed to communicate to his secretary for Health and Human Services. When New Democrats fail, old Republicans—or Victorians—must take up the job.

Right Data

Safety in (Small) Numbers

DEMOGRAPHIC trends indicate that more Americans will be tapping into entitlement programs, and fewer workers will be paying for them. Fiscal imbalance and higher taxes seem certain.

But politics may yet trump demographics. Milton Friedman, Mancur Olson, and other scholars have long argued that when interest groups grow too large, they impose unacceptable costs on the rest of society. Eventually their political clout wanes. By contrast, small, tightly organized groups can often pursue their agendas unmolested. Farmers exemplify the returns to smallness.

FEDERAL BENEFITS VS. BENEFICIARIES

Special Interest Group	Number in Group (Mil.)	Total Federal Benefits ($Bil.)	Per-Capita Benefit
Farmers	2.9	63(a)	$21,724
Elderly/Disabled	42.2	514(b)	12,180
The Poor	39.3	162(c)	4,122
Taxpayers	113.8	400(d)	3,515

a) Department of Agriculture Budget, 1993. b) Social Security, Medicare, and other federal retirement and disability programs, 1993. c) Means-tested entitlements, 1993. d) Federal income-tax breaks, 1992.

Source: CBO, OMB, IRS, Dept. of Commerce

In 1930 farm families accounted for 25 per cent of the U.S. population. Today they account for less than 2 per cent. Yet the USDA budget (in constant 1993 dollars) rose from near zero in 1930 to $9 billion in 1940, to $32 billion in 1970, to $63 billion in 1993. And the budget doesn't reflect $10 billion in higher food costs because of federal price supports.

The key to understanding Washington's farm policy is that the vast majority of the four hundred or so farm products produced in this country receive no federal aid whatsoever. Benefits are concentrated; costs are widely dispersed. The U.S. sugar program, for example, costs $5.60 for each American, but showers $1.4 billion on just 12,000 sugar producers. The GAO found 17 cane growers got 58 per cent of the benefits—one raking in $30 million.

At the other extreme is the hapless U.S. taxpayer. In 1939 only the wealthiest 7.7 million Americans paid personal income taxes. Tax payments averaged $121 per return, or 3.8 per cent of gross income. In 1992 (the latest year of available IRS data) 113.8 million of us filed returns. The effective tax rate that year: 13.7 per cent, or more than four times the pre-war level.

Taxpayers may be angry, but they're not well organized. It's hardly surprising, then, that the average value of all tax deductions and exemptions—$3,515 per return in 1992—falls below the benefits received by smaller groups.

What about the elderly? Social Security, Medicare, and other federal retirement programs already account for about two-thirds of all entitlement spending. Surely as the baby-boomers retire and life expectancies rise, they will eat up nearly all entitlement funds. Or will they?

University of California economist Richard McKenzie believes that AARP is already a victim of "the law of the many." Real per-capita benefits paid to elderly Americans doubled during the 1960s and rose another 61 per cent in the 1970s. In the 1980s, however, they hit a wall. After netting out taxes on Social Security and Medicare premiums, McKenzie calculates that per-capita benefits (in constant 1988 dollars) were $6,072 in 1988, compared to $6,229 in 1986, and $6,100 in 1982.

When Social Security and Medicare expenses topped $200 billion, as they did in the 1980s, the elderly became a juicy target. Benefit taxes, higher premiums, a more conservative COLA, and benefit recalculations soon followed. McKenzie's model predicts that, baby-boomers notwithstanding, total real benefits paid to elderly Americans will start to fall in the first decade of the new century. The sacred cow may finally be dead.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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Administration in Meltdown

THE *China Syndrome*, an anti-nuclear horror movie of the late Seventies, presented a nuclear reactor that threatened to go out of control and sink, glowing, through the earth, presumably all the way to China. The path it would have followed is being taken now by the Clinton White House.

The departure of **Lloyd Bentsen** deprives the Clintonites of their lone adult. Mr. Bentsen's intellectual odyssey has been sad, almost tragic. Fifteen years ago, he was a supply-sider, in the vanguard of congressmen calling for pro-growth tax cuts. But sometime in the mid Eighties, he was bitten by a yearning to adorn a national ticket. He began to talk double on taxes, paving the way for a role in a double-talking Administration. The long shadow of Arkansas reached out to take former Associate Attorney General **Webster Hubbell**, once partner in the Rose Law Firm, now scrambling to cooperate with Whitewater independent counsel Kenneth Starr. Former Agriculture Secretary **Mike Espy** lost his job over ties to Arkansas's other growth industry, Tyson Foods. The chicken producers sent Espy to the Super Bowl and gave a scholarship to his girlfriend. Commerce Secretary **Ron Brown** has kept his nose clean, but he may be leaving to head the Democratic National Committee—cruel and unusual punishment.

Then there are those who *should* be leaving. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development **Henry Cisneros**, entangled in a scandal involving an ex-mistress, continues to lead cheers for the public scandal which is HUD. Transportation Secretary **Federico Peña** emulates Haitian policy by conducting an on-again off-again fight with General Motors. Secretary of Health and Human Services **Donna Shalala**, health guru **Ira Magaziner**, and the whole **Hillary** wing of the Administration get their fair share of blame for the health-care debacle, the absence of welfare reform, etc., etc. But the East Wing ideologues have their West Wing counterparts—**George Stephanopoulos** and **Harold Ickes**. Both men are under ethical clouds—Mr. Stephanopoulos for a sweetheart deal on a D.C. townhouse, Mr. Ickes over allegations that he once represented a mobbed-up labor union—but the damage they do is substantive. George is charming and Harold is not, but their politics are identical, and hard liberal. Stephanopoulos worked for Richard Gephardt when he stormed left in the run-up to his 1988 presidential run. Ickes worked for Jesse Jackson during the same contest. Whenever the President remembers his 1992 campaign rhetoric (as amputees sometimes "feel" their missing limbs), Stephanopoulos and Ickes are there, at the 7:30 A.M. staff meeting, to tug him back into line.

The line, and the line-up, that leads to China.

The Night Visitor

'Twas the night before Christmas,
And Bill, feeling blue,
Was half zonked from a nightcap,
When down through the flue
Came what had to be Limbaugh,
In drag as a witch,
Making Hillary scream and
Bill's allergies itch.

W. H. VON DREELE

Joycelyn Elders, R I P

THE LATE professor Willmoore Kendall, a founding editor of this journal, used to argue with his seminar students that the line then being attempted by Congress to distinguish between tolerable dissent (the vegetarians) and intolerable dissent (the Communists) could not satisfactorily be drawn on ideological schematics. What society can't tolerate, he said, isn't clear and present danger, but clear and present objectionability.

Well of course President Clinton wasn't proscribing the sayings of Dr. Elders as beyond the bounds of the First Amendment. But he did reach the point of saying, in effect, that Dr. Elders was just—too much. She had along the line shown the courage to ask whether it really made sense to criminalize drugs (for even raising the question, she was all but impeached). But then she became the biggest addict in town of Anything Goes in the area of sexual activity. The Catholic Church was "crazy" to have rules on the subject; illegitimacy is simply one of those things that happen, like poison ivy . . .

Perhaps if she had not strung out her disdain for conventional restraint her final observation, that masturbation was a fine alternative to AIDS exposure, would have been passed over as typical of a scientific clinician's approach to any problem (obviously, masturbation is preferable to AIDS). But she was serving as surgeon general, and Dr. Koop, her predecessor, had transformed the SG's lectern into a bully pulpit. Dr. Elders had become an omnipresence, and so Mr. Clinton finally gave her the old heave-ho, as P. G. Wodehouse would have put it.

We have got the snap-anger of the legions who go on about the right of anybody to say anything. But those legions have developed a sore throat in recent times, and the sound one heard most discernibly was the unmistakable music of: national relief. The satisfaction that that noisy lady would henceforward prescribe for

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America other than as a representative of the President of the United States.

Squeezing Orange County

WHEN Orange County's Treasurer bet that interest rates would continue to fall in 1994, he took a big risk. Rates were already at their lowest level in a generation. A rate rise would send the value of the county's interest-sensitive derivatives plunging. Worse still, these risky investments were financed with borrowed funds. Margin calls would quickly exhaust any cash on hand.

The predictability of Orange County's debacle—along with those of Procter and Gamble, Sears Roebuck, Gibson Greeting Cards, and a slew of other burnt derivative players—reinforces the common-sense view: culpability rests with financial managers at individual firms and governments. They have no one but themselves to blame for believing that a crash could never occur, for ignoring the risks of their investments, for failing to protect stockholders or taxpayers from clear and present danger.

No one but Orange Countians will bail out Orange County. Nevertheless, federal regulators want to restrict derivatives. They warn that a derivative-induced default by a major bank or securities dealer could spread rapidly throughout the financial system, creating an S&L-type crisis—or worse. Yet the derivative dealers (like the S&Ls of a decade ago) are already very heavily regulated. Firms, like Merrill Lynch, that sold their products to Orange County are regulated by the SEC. And the banks that do the vast bulk of the derivatives business are regulated by at least one and sometimes as many as three separate regulators. Where federal regulations don't reach (insurance companies that sell derivatives, for example) the market has regulated itself, setting up separate derivatives affiliates with triple-A credit ratings.

Years ago George Stigler warned us never to take regulators' explanations at face value. While professing a concern for the greater good, they're really looking out for number one. New financial rules will mean juicy new positions. Of course, this is peanuts if it means avoiding financial Armageddon. Yet impartial research suggests that derivatives, properly used, have been an important stabilizing factor, not the bogeyman portrayed by Washington.

Few people fully understand the derivatives markets, how they behave, or how they affect other markets. It's a sure bet, however, that the participants know more than the regulators. One leading academic observer, University of Chicago economist Merton Miller, argues that government regulation is the "sand in the oyster" that stimulates much financial innovation. It is a foregone conclusion that any such innovation will run circles around the regulators and congressmen rushing to squelch it.

Three Woofs for Dogs

BUREAUCRATS are unhappy unless they are issuing policies, so last week the New York City Housing Authority suddenly decided that, as of New Year's Eve, all the Authority's tenants must get rid of their dogs, on pain of immediate eviction. Some Christmas this would be. But then the feisty *New York Post* published a front-page counterattack complete with pathetic photos of Kippy, Casey, and Boo-Boo, whose owners rely on them for companionship and protection. Outraged calls and faxes flooded City Hall. Three hours after hearing about the order, Mayor Giuliani reversed it.

In this holiday-season tale we see an old-fashioned victory of good over evil. Legend has it that when Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, a fissure began to open in the earth. On one side stood the animals who lived in the Garden. At the last minute, one animal jumped across to join the first humans: the dog. Loyalty, love, courage, and charm—these are virtues in increasingly short supply among people, but dogs retain them in abundance. At a time of year when we're encouraged to reflect on God's goodness, no better symbol suggests itself than this virtuous pet.

Why Christmas Is Merry

CHRISTMAS is celebrated in every corner of the globe, and in the West it has been celebrated for almost two millennia. It will be celebrated two millennia hence.

On a purely historical view something remarkable must have happened two thousand years ago in ancient Israel. Effects have causes. No other birthday has been so long or so widely celebrated, let alone so joyfully. Nobody celebrates the birthday of Christ's contemporary, the Emperor Tiberius. Alexander, Julius Caesar, George Washington, Napoleon, Winston Churchill have not given rise to anything comparable. Confucius, Buddha, Lao-Tse, Mohammad have had profound effects, but profoundly different.

In another direction, consider the great writers—Homer and Shakespeare, for example. They not only entertain us but move us to profound thought. But they do not change lives in the way that the discourse of Jesus has done. His voice is a voice apart.

So we exchange presents, and in doing so, some recall the gifts of the Wise Men. If there is a star on the Christmas tree, some will be reminded of the star in

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the East, a heavenly disturbance actually remarked at the time by Chinese astronomers. The excitement of this birthday rolls through the ages like no other.

W. B. Yeats was not even close to being a Christian, and yet he found himself writing,

I saw a staring virgin stand
Where holy Dionysus died.
And tear the heart out of his side,
And lay the heart upon her hand,
And bear that beating heart away;
And then did all the Muses sing
Of Magnus Annus at the spring,
As though God's death were but a play.

Yes, the classical gods and the classical world were ending; ending, in Eliot's phrase, "with a whimper," the child's whimper in that manger in Bethlehem.

And so the bells ring out, the old carols are sung, and the bowl goes round, because, as Milton entitled his poem, it is "The Morning of Christ's Nativity."

Neil McCaffrey, R I P

NATIONAL REVIEW was only two or three years old when the letter came in from Neil McCaffrey (he did not like to use the telephone). He had concluded, he wrote, that the success of our magazine was indispensable to his ambitions for his God, his country, and his family, and he was therefore willing to do what he could to promote our interests; it happened, he went on, that he was something of a wizard in the direct-promotion field and his services were henceforward available to us in return for zero compensation.

Letters offering life & limb for NATIONAL REVIEW are certainly not frequent, but Neil's was not unique. As a rule, generous impulses of that character go hand in hand with proffered services not terribly useful to a magazine whose concerns are simply to get quality copy and to pay the printer. But Neil's letter was itself testimony to vital skills and soon he was our primary promotion consultant, working hand in hand with our own Jim McFadden.

In due course Neil left Doubleday and founded his own companies, most notably the Conservative Book Club, which thrives to this day; and Arlington House, a publishing house that lasted for a dozen years, but suffered finally from the success of the fight it waged: conservatism became increasingly acceptable and other publishers, better capitalized, were willing to take on authors up until then tolerated only by Arlington House and of course, pre-eminently, the Regnery Company. McCaffrey's enthusiasms included jazz music. In 1968 he founded the Nostalgia Book Club, himself editing the four-volume *Roger Kinkle's Complete Encyclopedia of Popular Music and Jazz 1900–1950*. He launched the club with an ad in the *New York Times* characteristic of his style: "Kids Under 35: This Ad Is Not for You."

Neil's sense of who did not belong to his inner cultural-ideological-theological circle was, to put it generously, narrowly prescribed. The Pope only just survived, and only because as the descendant of Peter, he was just beyond Neil's excommunicative authority.

He was the most generous friend. In an early book done for Arlington House Garry Wills wrote, "This book was his [McCaffrey's] idea. . . . He worked with me and against me, while insisting that I call my work what is only partly mine. The best is his. The idea is his. I hope I have not spoiled it." And he was the sternest critic of any turn he deemed deviationist. His letters, so vibrant and amusing, were also classics of withering scorn. From time to time their effect (they had the sound of an executioner's song), if not always their purpose, was to bring about a break in personal relations. Some friends felt permanently cut off, and this was high-octane sadness for those who so much enjoyed his company, social and epistolary. Those who were lucky had working professional interests in common, in which case they hung on to transactable relations, and had the pleasure of reading more letters composed by a man with the temper of Evelyn Waugh, and a talent not entirely dissimilar.

It had been several months since the word got out, lung cancer. His wife, so widely beloved, was of course with him, as also his six children. What proved the final day came suddenly, and now he was completely silent, and there was only the music he loved so much. But then his wife thought in mid afternoon to substitute from Neil's musical library a softer-sounding record in place of the disk specified in the long-since-established roster. He heard the alien sound and raised his hand. Joan approached him and Neil managed to emit: "*Same order!*" His last words, and they incorporated his feelings about his church, the Constitution, and the primacy of his devoted family. —WFB

Notes & Asides

■ Memo to: WFB
From: McF

Bill: You were out of the country when Christopher [Buckley's] "Headlines of 1995" appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*. Enjoy!

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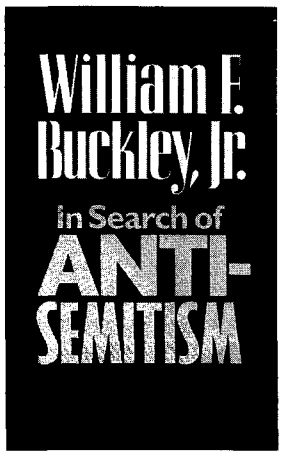
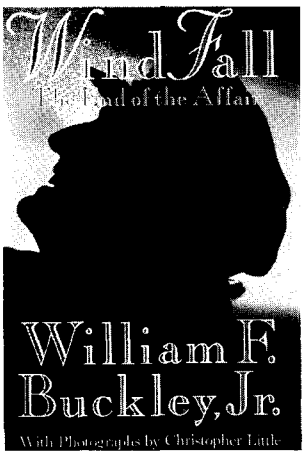
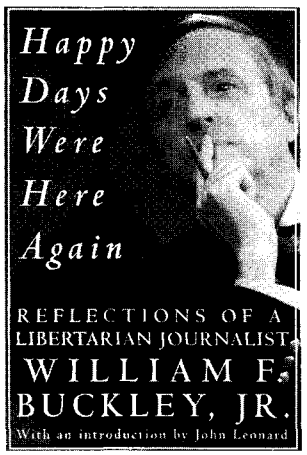
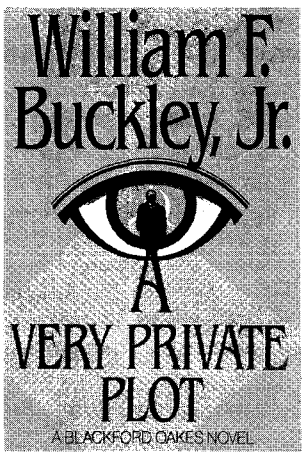
THINKER, SAILOR, TOLD YA, SPY






Happy Days Were Here Again
REFLECTIONS OF A LIBERTARIAN JOURNALIST
WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.
With an introduction by John Leonard



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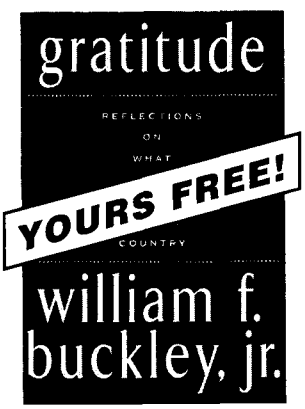

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Not Only Can It Happen Here, It Probably Will Happen Here

Amtrak Engineer Drives Train
Into Front of White House;
President Unhurt, But "Annoyed"
No RR Tracks near Exec Mansion;
Calls for Congressional Inquiry

Gore Calls for Reduction
In Bovine Flatulence
Says Unless Farmers Stop Letting Cows
Eat Wet Grass, Global Methane
Will Reach "Catastrophic Levels"

Yeltsin Sleeps Through Own UN Speech;
Aides: He Was "Tired" After Long Flight

Secret Service Arrests Jesse Helms
His Defense: He Was Only "Joking"
When He Offered Ambassadorship
To Any Amtrak Engineer Who Would
Drive Train into White House

Royal Shocker!
Book by Queen's Corgi
Alleges Terror, Abuse:
"She Hit Us with Newspaper
After Rug Accident and
Yelled, 'Naughty Doggies!'"

Judge Ito Stuns Court
By Taking Phone Calls
In Midst of Proceedings
"Go On, I'm Listening," He Tells
Prosecutor as She Halts
Cross-Examination of Witness

Simpson Judge Sells Rights
To Movie Based on His Life
Before Trial Is Concluded
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Scientists Say They Have Found
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Philip Morris Unveils Cigarette
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"It's not a new tree stand. It's the fruitcake your mother baked last year."

Italy Upset by U.S. Stamp
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Hillary Clinton Announces Resignation;
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Support Perot's Alien Claim;
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Duke of Edinburgh's Book Disputes
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Says Lifting His Son Off the Ground by Ears
Was Only Meant to "Build Character"

Barry Proposes Merging
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Says Move Would Make Administration
Workers Feel "More at Home"

Gore Says He Will Not Run in '96
But Is "Frustrated" by First Lady Role

O. J. Simpson Acquitted

—WFB

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ON THE SCENE

The Undeserving Rich

RICH LOWRY

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

LIFE is sweet for the Fanjul family of Palm Beach, Florida. Not only do the Fanjuls own several lucrative sugar farms in the Everglades, but the Federal Government forces consumers to subsidize their business. The U.S. sugar program guarantees that the price for domestic sugar is roughly twice the going rate on the world market. According to a recent General Accounting Office report, in 1991 about 42 per cent of the benefits of this program went to 1 per cent of sugar farms, i.e., the largest sugar barons. By one estimate the Fanjuls earn about $64 million a year in artificial profits because of the program. They live a jet-set lifestyle (they own a 26-room Palm Beach mansion) and plow some of the profits back into trying to influence Washington politics (all told, more than $350,000 in contributions in the 1992 election cycle), while skimping on their workers (as of 1990, the Labor Department had forced them to pay about $900,000 in back wages and reimbursements).

As this case shows, not all unworthy beneficiaries of government largesse are unemployed denizens of the inner cities. As the GOP begins its blitz on Washington—including a welfare-reform plan that the media like to say features "Dickensian orphanages"—it faces a challenge involving both principle and public relations. Do Republicans believe in small government enough to propose spending cuts that hit their traditional constituencies, rural instead of urban, corporate instead of working class? And can they shake the still potentially powerful image of the GOP as the party of the country club?

Republicans now enjoy a stunning rapport with the voters. A late-November *USA Today* poll found the party has a 70 per cent favorable rating. On almost every issue, the public trusts the Republicans more than the Democrats. The one area where the GOP's image lags is that of class. According to a Luntz Research poll taken just after the election, Democrats edge Republicans 38 to 36 per cent as the party best representing the middle class. Democrats can also take some heart from Clinton pollster Stan Greenberg's post-election focus groups with independent voters, which elicited numerous complaints that Republicans are for "the rich" or "big business." The same swing group of Perot voters that gave Republicans their sweep this year could just as easily provide the base for a populist revolt against a "big money" GOP.

That's why the high profile given to the capital-gains tax cut has some Republicans cringing. "It's like leading with your chin," says pollster Frank Luntz, who played a key role in assembling the Contract with America. "It's an example of good policy but bad politics." Republicans lost the capital-gains fight in 1989 to the "tax cut for the rich" argument, and they will face the same attack next year. So Republicans are likely to be forced into arguing that giving money to the rich (capital-gains cut) is good for all of us, while taking money from the poor (welfare reform) is good for the poor.

The argument has the advantage of being true but the liability of seeming hypocritical. One shield against the "party of the rich" charge is the Contract's $500-per-child tax credit; the money goes straight to families, and the credit doesn't apply to households with incomes over $200,000. A second defensive tactic would be to take money from the rich as well as the poor; if impoverished single mothers have to get off the dole, so should the Fanjuls. "We need to prove that Republicans aren't in this for what they can get," says David Frum, author of *Dead Right*. "If Republicans don't zealously defend things in their bailiwick, like agri-business, that will prove they're a different kind of party."

THE Department of Agriculture is the GOP's best target. It is a sort of Health and Human Services in reverse—dishing out benefits that rise as the recipient's need falls. Since 1985, for example, the Market Promotion Program has lavished money on corporations such as McDonald's, Campbell Soup, and Newman's Own to advertise their products overseas. In 1991 Pillsbury got $2.9 million, Sunkist nearly $10 million, and Dole about $3 million from the program.

That's just for starters. The sugar program, says the GAO, costs consumers about $1.4 billion a year. The peanut program, which permits only those with a federal license to grow peanuts for consumption, costs consumers $314 to $513 million a year. The bigger subsidy programs—for wheat, corn, rice, and cotton—cost taxpayers about $10 billion a year. About two-thirds of these payments go to the richest 15 per cent of farmers, while the net worth of the average farmer is twice that of the average U.S. family. "In my copies of Milton Friedman and Ludwig von Mises," says Representative Barney Frank (D., Mass.), "the footnote that says none of this applies to farm programs was left out."

Mr. Lowry is NR*'s national political reporter.*

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Missing too, no doubt, were the footnotes explaining the array of other pro-business subsidies, loan guarantees, and research grants—totaling more than $80 billion over five years—in a list compiled by the Progressive Policy Institute's Robert Shapiro. And Shapiro was being conservative. His list didn't include the Small Business Administration, which runs a loan program for businesses already turned down for loans by at least two banks. It omitted the Commerce Department, which runs trade-promotion and economic-development programs best left to private businesses. It didn't mention the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and its programs for upper-middle-class viewers and listeners.

Can the GOP end corporate welfare as we know it? "The Republicans aren't going to take this on without Democratic support," Shapiro says. "Both parties feel it's too politically treacherous. So they need each other." He proposes a bipartisan commission, like the one that oversees the closing of military bases, to turn off the spending.

But the mandate of the "revolution" was for the GOP to become a bipartisan commission unto itself, a force for all the common-sense reforms frustrated by institutional Washington during the last forty years. "It was liberal politicians," notes Paul Weaver, author of *The Suicidal Corporation*, "who built into public law the subsidies, the protection, and the deals that big business sought." Plenty of Republicans went along, but Democrats reaped the richest rewards. The Republican National Committee estimates that over the last two years it received about $20 million in corporate contributions, while its Democratic counterpart got as much as three times that amount. Meanwhile, the RNC doubled its base of small donors. If the GOP should be in anyone's hip pocket, it is hip pockets found in jeans and polyester slacks.

The Republican leadership in the House of Representatives—which includes Congress's most vocal and persistent critic of farm subsidies, Majority Leader Dick Armey (Tex.)—seems to understand the political imperative of broad spending cuts. Ohio Representative John Kasich's alternative budgets have made important moves toward slashing the corporate dole. Different versions would have scaled back the Export–Import Bank (which subsidizes foreign buyers of U.S. products), the Small Business Administration, the Commerce Department, and a variety of energy-related research grants and subsidies. But pushing the cuts further and actually enacting them will mean beating back entrenched congressional interests, including those of GOP lawmakers.

The leadership's initial tangle with these forces, in the just-approved committee realignment, was far from a clear victory. For instance, the Small Business Committee survived, and its members will now provide a constituency for the preservation of the Small Business Administration. A spokesman explains that Committee Chairman Jan Meyers (R., Kan.) "sees the SBA and the Federal Government as appropriately involved in lending a hand through these [loan] programs." More significant is the survival of an intact Agriculture Committee. Farm bills get passed because they have so many goodies—sugar programs, cotton programs, peanut programs, etc.—that most rural legislators have something at stake; then the Food Stamp program is thrown into the pot, and urban legislators get on board too. It's a perfect confluence of urban and rural welfare. Reformer David Dreier (R., Calif.) wanted to strip Food Stamps from Agriculture's jurisdiction, but incoming Committee Chairman Pat Roberts (R., Kan.) would have none of it.

Republican leaders say committee reshuffling wasn't worth bitter fights now—they'll tame the entrenched interests when it really counts. It will be a task requiring the flexing of every muscle Newt Gingrich will have as speaker. Gingrich plans a down-to-earth celebration of the new Congress on opening day, with casual dress and an admission price of $25; the hope is that there won't be a limousine in sight. It's a symbolic master-stroke. But the true populist test will be if there are no limousines sidling up to the federal budget next year to grab the usual giveaways, and if the complaints about GOP stinginess aired on ABC News next year come not just from welfare mothers in East Harlem, but from corporate executives in pinstripes too. □

Bear Hug

MARK ALMOND

Konstantin Valov

LONDON

REMEMBER the time after the end of the Cold War when there was supposed to be only one superpower? Well, East Europeans joke, there is still only one superpower: it's called Russia.

The abdication of U.S. leadership over Bosnia and the sidelining of President Clinton during his flying visit to the Budapest CSCE summit make the bitter humor only a little exaggerated. Boris Yeltsin's growls about Russia's unwillingness to accept any expansion of NATO eastward to include countries such as Poland and Hungary were intended to send shivers down Western spines, which duly froze. The new wind of "cold peace" blowing from the Kremlin had been tried out a few days earlier when Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev turned up at NATO headquarters in Brussels and shocked NATO leaders by refusing to sign up for the "Partnership for Peace." His refusal was the only purpose of his visit. He came to snub them in person. As if to rub in the message, the Russian ambassador to the UN Security Council issued his first veto since the fighting began in Bosnia.

Mr. Almond is a lecturer in modern European history at Oriel College, Oxford.

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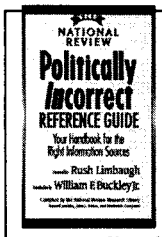

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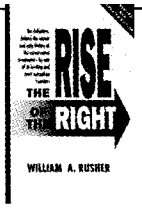

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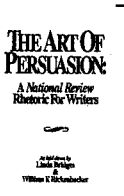

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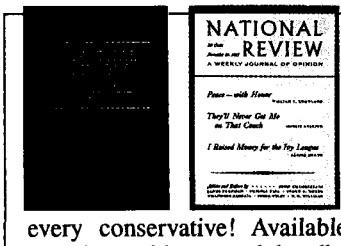

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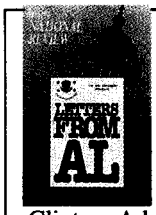

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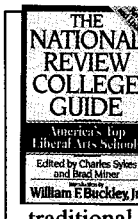
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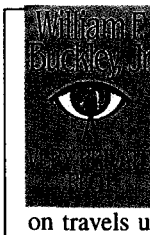

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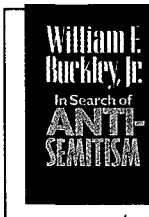

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The striking thing about Russia's new assertiveness is the differing reactions it has elicited in Washington and in the capitals of America's European allies. Having climbed down repeatedly over Bosnia, Bill Clinton seemed determined to rescue some dignity on the larger issue by insisting that his Administration stood for NATO expansion eastward. Reading deliberately from a text, he insisted that it was for NATO alone to decide who could join the club.

Unfortunately, he forgot what sort of people are already members of the club. In the previous week, the almost hysterical response in London and Paris to Senator Bob Dole's plainly justified criticisms of the UN operation in Bosnia should have brought home to the President just how far Europe has drifted from the United States in the last few years. But Mr. Clinton is himself adrift in European affairs.

An enthusiast for European Union, he seems to have overlooked the anti-American motivation of its supporters on this side of the Atlantic. Forty years of dependence on the U.S. Army for defense has created a culture of resentment among many Europeans. The end of the Cold War seemed to offer them the chance to cut free from America's apron strings.

Thus, at the beginning of the wars in ex-Yugoslavia, the European Commission announced that the situation was "a problem for Europe." EC President Jacques Delors told America to keep out. Years of blundering in the Balkans followed. Now the chief incompetents, the British and French, moan that the U.S. Government has not made the same mistakes they did—in particular the mistake of putting in ground troops with no clear mission. How dare Senator Dole criticize their timid approach to lifting the arms embargo when lightly armed GIs are not scattered around Bosnia, largely useless except as hostages? In short, until Washington shoots itself in the foot like London and Paris, it should not offer advice.

The French response to Dole's comments was hardly surprising. France has rarely been enthusiastic about Europe's close alliance with America. More surprising was the venom of British ministers wounded by the senator's remarks. Their attacks reveal how deep has been the change in Britain regarding the Anglo-American relationship. Prime Minister John Major himself has never shown much interest in it. Lip service has been paid to it by his two key cabinet ministers, in foreign relations, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and Defense Secretary Malcolm Rifkind, but they are also among the Tories' most enthusiastic supporters of European Union.

The latest expression of European identity is in defense—something the French have long supported but the British resisted until recently. For the key to fostering a true European defense identity is cutting trans-Atlantic links. If the European states were up to defending themselves, a real partnership of equals with the United States might not be a bad thing. It could double the West's power and influence—though it might instead result in a West divided between rival superpowers. Unfortunately, all the evidence is that the Europeans lack the robustness required to play the superpower, whether alongside or in opposition to America.

Their timidity in the face of growls from the Russian bear shows how ill prepared "Europe" is to direct an alliance in its own defense. Rifkind, the British defense secretary, has repeatedly claimed it is impossible for the British troops in Bosnia to defend themselves or lift the one-sided arms embargo, because then Russia would openly side with the Serbs. At the same time, the British establishment has formed a de facto diplomatic alliance with the Kremlin to resist any U.S. initiative to end the tragic farce in Bosnia. A leaked Foreign Office memorandum from July 1993 noted:

"The most useful Russian contribution of all . . . has been its firm resistance to U.S. pressure for lifting the arms embargo. . . . The UK has consistently opposed this lunatic idea, but our style has been cramped by the need to tend the 'special relationship.' . . . It has been reassuring to know that when the crunch came the Russian veto would be forthcoming."

Fear of antagonizing Russia runs through all the statements of Europe's elite. After President Clinton had clashed with Boris Yeltsin in Budapest, it was natural for his European allies to hurry to agree with the Kremlin. The new appeasement is on the march. Delors, who could be president of France in six months, warned against erecting around Russia "new frontiers which could only push people to frustration and aggression."

In the eyes of the Euro-elite, it is Poland and the Baltic states that frighten Russia rather than the other way around. Far from wanting to expand the European Union, these leaders in practice are happy with the post-Yalta boundaries. Bill Clinton may want the East Europeans in NATO, but the West Europeans are happy to leave them out in the cold—especially if that keeps Boris happy. (In any case, who wants to share Euro-subsidies with East Europeans?)

The irony of the Bosnian fiasco is that it has promoted European anti-Americanism and Russophilia at the same time. Kozyrev, the Russian foreign minister, plays on European anti-Yankee feelings when he asserts, "The fact remains that we Europeans should take care of ourselves." He even offers military and intelligence assistance to Imperial Russia's old ally, France. But if Russia is to be counted as part of Europe—and the United States counted out—any balance of power collapses and Russian hegemony looms.

Eighty years ago Sarajevo was the launching pad for a war that brought the United States decisively into European politics. Twice the U.S. rescued Europeans from disasters of their own making. Ironically, today Sarajevo is the focal point of a third European disaster within this century. But will the United States yet again ride to the rescue of its ungrateful allies? □

A Shot at the Temple

LAWRENCE KUDLOW

WASHINGTON, D.C.

NOBODY is happy with the Fed's interest-rate hikes—not Republicans, not Democrats, not the general public. Certainly not Wall Street, which decided to pull the plug on a $20-billion loan to Orange County, California, after the usually prosperous county announced a $1.5-billion loss on highly leveraged mort-

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gage-related investments called derivatives. A day later the county filed for bankruptcy. For consumers, about $900 billion of adjustable-rate home-mortgage payments will be reset in January to reflect a whopping 2.5-point interest-rate rise. The interest rates on roughly $200 billion of credit-card debt will also be reset. In other words, rising interest rates hurt.

Meanwhile, in Congress the new Republican majority is increasingly restless about the threat of interest-rate overkill on the part of the Fed, which could lead to a pause in growth or even recession by late 1995 or early 1996. This would add at least $100 billion to the budget deficit, and it could doom GOP hopes for a zero-deficit budget package of large-scale government downsizing and growth-oriented tax cuts. Against the backdrop of recession, the public will be in no mood to accept big cuts in welfare, farm subsidies, or health-care entitlements. While tax cuts would offset the slump, deficit hysteria prompted a tax *increase* during the 1990 recession and would be likely to again.

So Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan sat in the hot seat when he testified on December 7 before the Joint Economic Committee (JEC), his first congressional appearance since the November 8 election. Greenspan stubbornly insists that in the short run too much economic growth fuels inflation, and so the Fed must take action to raise rates and cool off the economy. Though he has never put a number on the "right" rate of economic growth, highly placed Fed insiders have said the target is 2.5 per cent.

So far this year the economy has grown by better than 4 per cent, and the unemployment rate has dropped to 5.6 per cent. The consumer price index has risen at a 2.8 per cent annual rate. This is the best economic performance since the mid Eighties, and in a sub-par recovery cycle it reflects considerable catching up. But the Fed does not like it; the central bank has raised short-term rates six times this year, most recently by three-quarters of a percentage point.

It came as no surprise when easy-money Democrats like Senator Paul Sarbanes (D., Md.) and Black Caucus Chairman Kweisi Mfume (D., Md.) attacked Greenspan during the hearing. But Greenspan realized he really had a fight on his hands when hard-money Senator Connie Mack (R., Fla.) asked, "What's wrong with growth?" Mack added, "Most Americans believe that growth and prosperity are good, not bad, and that people working productively can never cause inflation."

Mack wasn't finished. He told the Fed chairman there was little reason for the latest interest-rate hike, since gold and commodity indexes have been weakening since last June, and the growth of key money-supply measures have slowed markedly. Some industrial prices have increased, but not energy and farm prices. "So it would appear to me," the senator said, "that inflation worries are easing, not worsening, and the necessary monetary restraint was applied in the first half of this year . . . we may now be moving into an overkill situation."

Roman Genn

MACK is a rising star in the Republican Party. A former bank president from St. Petersburg, Florida, and the great-grandson of the winningest manager in baseball history (Hall of Famer Connie Mack of the Philadelphia Athletics), he served three terms in the House as a Conservative Opportunity Society colleague of Jack Kemp, Newt Gingrich, Vin Weber, and Trent Lott. First elected to the Senate in 1988 by a hair's-breadth margin of 31,000 votes (absentee ballots put him over the top), Mack won a 70 per cent landslide in 1994 over Hillary Clinton's brother. A confirmed free-market supply-sider with a strong record favoring limited government and tax cuts, Mack is also determinedly pro-life and pro-free-speech (he once defended a Florida rap band).

The day his friend Trent Lott was elected majority whip, Mack was elected unopposed as secretary of the Republican Conference, thus putting him in a leadership position for the first time. He now hopes to use his upcoming JEC chairmanship as a platform for monetary reform as well as a beachhead for supply-side economics. After firing his initial shots across Greenspan's bow during the December hearing, he informed the Fed chairman that hearings will be convened in January to change the Humphrey–Hawkins Act, removing the Fed's mandate to control the economy and fine-tune jobs. He intends to substitute a strict cost-of-living inflation target that will not exceed 2 per cent a year.

"The public has a right to know what exactly the Fed is targeting and why you continue to raise interest rates," Mack told Greenspan. And he reminded the Fed chairman that inflation targets mandated by law have succeeded in countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico. Indeed, Mack believes strongly that a codified target will enhance the Fed's independence, not reduce it. What's more, he wants the Fed to meet this new inflation target by abandoning the federal-funds-rate target and instead keeping a sharp eye on international gold, commodity, and financial markets, which will tell the Fed whether policy is too loose or too tight. This approach is based on the understanding that global markets are smarter than central bankers.

Greenspan seemed willing to accept an inflation target, though he is not yet ready for a specific numerical goal. But Mack's decisive statements at the hearing put the Fed on notice that Republicans will not provide support for unlimited interest-rate hikes by a government agency that has no clear game plan and virtually no public accountability. Mack sees the Fed more as the Department of Money than the Temple of Money, and he believes it must be held to the same performance standards that the public wants applied to every other department.

Along with a complete redirection of fiscal policy, monetary policy will be part of the sea-change on Capitol Hill. This could be the first significant shift

Mr. Kudlow is NR*'s economics editor.*

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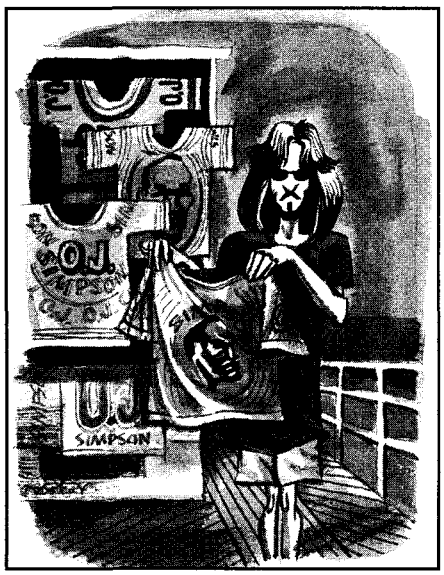
for the Fed since the early Seventies, when Arthur Burns started reporting money-supply targets. Those targets have long since been abandoned, and new Fed reform is long overdue. Meanwhile, Connie Mack has shown that at least some Republican senators expect to take part in the revolution. □

Freedom of Taste

NICK GILLESPIE



Konstantin Valov

LOS ANGELES

A LEFTIST friend called me a couple of months ago to report that the hottest Halloween costume was an oversized O. J. Simpson mask and rubber knife smeared with faux blood. "That's capitalism for you," he said, clucking his tongue. "You can sell anything in America, the sicker the better."

I recalled the defense of free markets given by the Nobel Prize–winning economist George Stigler in his 1961 essay, "The Intellectual and the Marketplace": "The marketplace responds to the tastes of consumers with goods and services that are salable, whether the tastes are elevated or depraved. . . . It is unfair to criticize the marketplace for fulfilling these desires, when clearly the defects lie in the popular tastes themselves."

This exchange comes to mind during a visit to Venice Beach in Los Angeles on a Saturday morning. The asphalt boardwalk in Venice—a Southern California fusion of Times Square and Coney Island—is a gathering spot for that sub-species of Angelenos known as "freaks." A 10-year-old male Michael Jackson impersonator is taking on a middle-aged female Michael Jackson impersonator in a moon-walking contest; a juggler *cum* stand up comedian is tossing roaring chainsaws in the air while spouting one-liners; another performer is swallowing lighter fluid and breathing fire; a woman is slowly sculpting a pile of wet sand into a nude female figure.

The place is lined with shops, kiosks, and vendors. You can buy just about anything here, whether you're looking for a radio or a removable tattoo, a rattan recliner or a refrigerator magnet shaped like the Beatles.

Or an O. J. Simpson T-shirt. Topical T-shirts have been an interest of mine for several years now, ever since Dan Rather was assaulted on the Upper East Side of Manhattan in 1986. Within hours, vendors were hawking shirts emblazoned with the enigmatic phrase attributed to Mr. Rather's anonymous attacker: "Kenneth, what is the frequency?"

As a free-market enthusiast, I take comfort in the speed with which resources are deployed to satisfy a burgeoning demand. Rarely does one get a better demonstration of how markets deliver the goods. (Presumably things work much less smoothly in a planned economy. North Koreans are, I'm sure, still waiting for their Kim Il Sung memorial paraphernalia.)

Mr. Simpson's situation, of course, is a complicated one, and there are shirts to match any possible attitude. There's the "We still love you, #32!" model for those who think O.J. is guilty but who remain sympathetic nonetheless. The "Who Framed O.J.?" number appeals to conspiracy buffs, while the "Loose the Juice!" shirt is perfect for stalwart supporters. Ironists no doubt incline toward the "Go, O.J., Go!" design, which simultaneously recalls Mr. Simpson's glory days at USC and with the Buffalo Bills, his efforts as a pitchman for Hertz, and his bizarre freeway procession with the police last June.

The salesman is Ray, a fortysomething black man wearing an "I Survived the Big One! January 17, 1994" T-shirt. As a matter of fact, it was immediately after the Northridge quake that Ray got into selling topical T-shirts. He won't discuss exactly where he gets his supply (some things, after all, should remain trade secrets), but he is more than happy to discuss sales figures.

"I sold about 250 earthquake shirts by the end of January," says Ray, who works for a plumber during the week. He started out selling them for $20 each, but by the last few days of the month he was giving them away at two for $12. Sales had dried up completely by February 1. "This ain't a long-term thing," he points out.

The O.J. shirts have had greater staying power. Back in June, just after Mr. Simpson's curious road trip along Interstate 405 pre-empted the sixth game of the NBA finals, Ray sold upwards of 30 shirts a day, at $20 a pop. Sales are lower now but remain steady. He unloads about 15 a weekend at a sawbuck apiece. "Some tourists'll pay $12," he says.

"I'd have thought things would pick up when the trial started," Ray muses, "but they haven't really." And indeed, the Simpson trial has so far been a yawner, adding little new to the damning, disturbing, and lurid charges that splashed across the front pages during the lengthy pre-trial hearing. But Ray is biding his time. He figures that sales will take off again, if only briefly, when a verdict is delivered.

While he's not particularly happy to be benefiting from Mr. Simpson's reversal of fortune, Ray is philosophical about his sideline. "Hey," he says, "I'm just trying to make some extra money. There ain't nothing wrong with selling stuff people'll buy."

Indeed, there is something right with the world when things work so smoothly. We should be prepared to take the bad with the good; in a free society, the two may be inextricably bound up with each other.

Once again, Professor Stigler has the answer: "It is proper to denounce vulgarity of taste, and to denounce it more strongly the more popular it is. . . . I consider it a cowardly concession to a false extension of the idea of democracy to make sub rosa attacks on public taste by denouncing the people who serve them. It is like blaming the waiters in restaurants for obesity." □

Mr. Gillespie is assistant editor at Reason.

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RANDOM WALK

VETERAN investment pro Tim Dalton, president of the New York–based Dalton, Greiner, Hartman, Maher and Co., with $3.5 billion under management, is increasingly bearish on the early-1995 stock-market outlook. He's worried about a liquidity squeeze engineered by the Federal Reserve, which he believes will end in overkill. As a result of Fed interest-rate hikes, signs of financial stress are already appearing, including the debacle in Orange County, California, where investment losses will continue to mount. "Derivatives and collateralized mortgage prices are way under water," says Dalton, "and no one knows where this will stop."

The Fed, meanwhile, will continue to fight economic growth by raising rates, he says, even though "gold and commodity prices have already peaked for this cycle." But while the Fed is withdrawing credit, the banks will continue to stimulate the economy for a while; they have plenty of government securities on hand to sell for the cash to accommodate business- and consumer-loan demand. Even though economic growth and bank credit are lagging indicators, the Fed will continue to squeeze the financial system to fight them. "People on Wall Street always talk about a soft landing," says Dalton, "but it very seldom happens."

While Dalton believes bond yields are in a "peaking phase," he sees trouble ahead for stocks. "Investors are talking bearish but haven't really acted that way," he says, noting the risk of a major run on mutual funds. All in all, the stock market is vulnerable to a 10 per cent correction. But Dalton thinks there is light at the end of the tunnel. "Money managers do not realize how determined the new Republican Congress is to shrink spending and cut the capital-gains tax," he says. If all this goes through, the long-run market outlook will be vastly improved. In the short run, however, while the Fed fiddles and politicians faddle, cash is king.

■ Speaking of high interest rates, supply-side Chicago economist Brian Westbury of the firm Griffin, Kubik, Stephens and Thompson expects the federal-funds rate, now at 5.5 per cent, to rise to between 6.5 and 6.75 per cent in 1995, while long-term Treasury-bond yields top out in the 8.5-to-9-per-cent range. Westbury thinks the Fed is not yet truly tight. He notes that adjusted Fed credit, composed mainly of Fed holdings of government securities, rose at an annual rate of 10.2 per cent for the three years ending January 1994. This stimulus has temporarily boosted the economy despite the drag from higher tax and regulatory burdens. Following recent interest-rate increases, Fed credit growth has slowed to 8.8 per cent. But this will not stop inflation from rising to between 4 and 4.5 per cent in 1995, and by late next year the economy will slow to 2.5 per cent. So Westbury sees slower growth, faster inflation, and higher interest rates: all danger signals.

■ "Throughout history, the number-one way that people avoided excessive taxation is flight," says Charles Adams, historian and author of *For Good and Evil: The Impact of Taxes on the Course of Civilization.* Adams estimates that during the past two hundred years "more people have fled Europe for America to escape high taxes than for any other reason."

But today, it's the U.S. that's suffering a brain drain. *Money* magazine reported recently that "as many as 250,000 Americans are leaving the country for good every year." Mostly they are the best, brightest, and most productive citizens. And recent survey results indicate that one of every four Americans with incomes over $50,000 "has contemplated" leaving the United States.

Forbes calls these expatriates "the new refugees." It cites billionaire John Dorrance III, heir to the Campbell Soup empire, who last year renounced his U.S. citizenship and became a citizen of Ireland. Michael Dingman, chairman of Abex, now resides in the low-tax Bahamas. Other popular hideaways include Hong Kong, Singapore, Costa Rica, and, of course, the Cayman Islands. Robert Lawrence of the New York law firm Cadwalader Wickersham and Taft, who advises clients on expatriation, says Switzerland is a hot spot now. "You can pretty much negotiate your own private agreement" with the Swiss over annual income taxes, he says. Attorneys who specialize in expatriation say business has never been better.

The reason for the sudden surge in emigration is a combination of the upward creep of America's income-tax rates (combined federal and state rates are well over 50 per cent in some states) and an estate-tax system that borders on confiscation. With only a few exceptions, the U.S. has the highest death taxes in the world. An estate worth $5 million, for example, pays a whopping 55 per cent tax. This compares with a negligible tax on that same estate in Canada, Hong Kong, and the Bahamas. Now that Dorrance is an Irishman, his heirs will pay a meager 2 per cent.

I've remarked before on the disturbing outflow of capital from the United States. Now it's not just money that's seeking refuge. Bill Clinton and George Bush have managed to depreciate the most treasured asset in the world: U.S. citizenship. —GEKKO

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help

A Worst Case

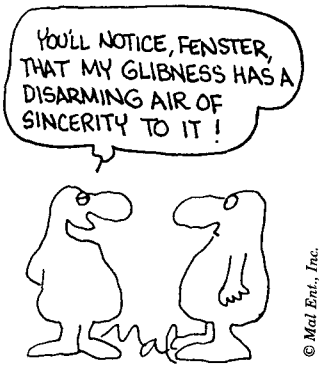
On the fifth day of Christmas.
I'll throw up if I see
Paula withdrawing,
Teddy guffawing,
Hillary baking,
Dodd bellyaching,
And a whole lousy year with Dee Dee.

W. H. VON DREELE

"Frank is a one man McLaughlin Group."

"I don't remember there being so many naughty children before."

"This one is the most realistic. It droops and sheds."



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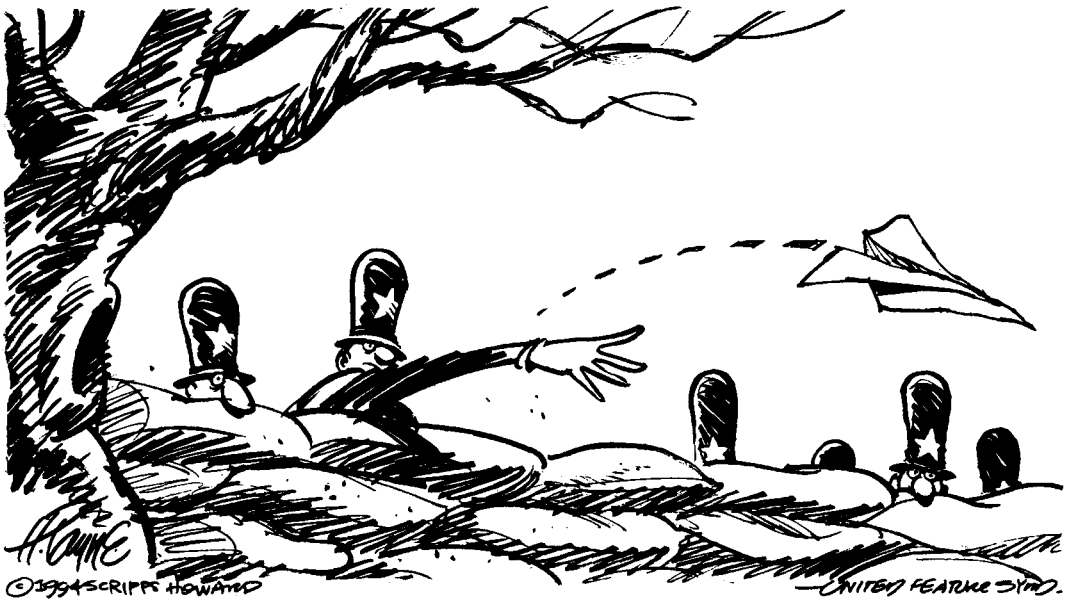

U.N.-AUTHORIZED, NATO-COORDINATED, NON-PARTISAN, PRECISION AIR ATTACK ON SERBIAN AIRFIELD.

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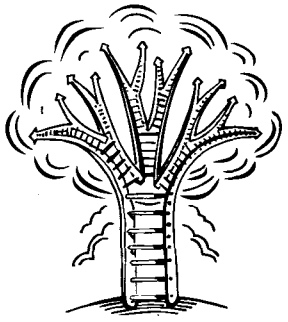
REEVES' KENNEDY

Edited and introduced by Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

MY FRIEND (who is also my son) anticipated my reluctance when, a year ago, he urged me to read the new book about John F. Kennedy. I had privately resolved not to read any more about JFK until after I had caught up on Julius Caesar, Napoleon, and Frederick the Great. But when a book is recommended by someone in whose sensibilities you have confidence and who knows how overstuffed your reading list is, generic resolutions weaken. I put Richard Reeves' *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* on my short list, which meant it had a 10 per cent chance of getting read.

And then too the word of mouth was lapping in: The book was "essential" reading. It was "novel," "ingenious," "brilliant," and free of ideological predisposition.



These reports came in about a very well-known journalist, someone with whom I had had (limited) personal experience, some of whose other books I had read. Richard Reeves is the author of *The Reagan Detour* and *American Journey: Traveling with Tocqueville in Search of Democracy in America*, among other books. Politically, he is a liberal; as a writer, his work is fast-paced, intelligent, and superbly organized.

What he set out to do in *President Kennedy* is indeed novel. He has reconstructed the 35th President of the United States by focusing on his day-to-day activities beginning with his election as President, and he ends the book immediately on the impact of Lee Harvey Oswald's bullet. Reeves' modus operandi is to put together a presidential day, focusing on events that took place on that day, going on to what touched on the same questions in the days and weeks and indeed months ahead. He has managed to do this persuasively by reading everything written about JFK, by exploring his papers, and by engaging in hundreds of interviews with men and women who were on the scene with Kennedy. Having done this, he proceeds to tell you what happened in the Kennedy White House as surefootedly as if he had himself been present.

The technique makes for a marvelously readable tale. It has the narrative advantages of historical fiction—what were the words uttered? the thoughts thought?—but Reeves is scrupulous about confining himself, when without a live witness to rely upon, to reconstructions of what simply had to have been so. If the first photograph available to the researcher shows Abbie sitting down, spoon in hand, gazing at a plate of ice cream, and the third photograph, taken five minutes later, shows the plate empty, your failure to come up with the second photo should not deny you the liberty to speak of Abbie's having consumed the ice cream.

Another of Reeves' conventions is to follow through a narrative of a political initiative/crisis/adventure without interruptions of the kind one associates with choppy newscasts ("We interrupt this broadcast to announce that there has been an eruption in Pompeii . . .") except when such interruptions clarify the ongoing narrative. When the story stretches out over a long period, as with JFK and the civil-rights movement, Reeves will work simultaneously on a half-dozen canvases. In dealing with civil rights, for instance, he begins early in JFK's Administration, describing the convulsive effects on the Kennedy White House of one civil-rights demonstration. Several hundred pages go by before we reach the great March on Washington, only a few months before Dallas. The reader is taken from day to day: what Kennedy thought, what he was advised to think, what he was advised to do, what he did. We hear—and feel, in some cases—the people around JFK, and the people around the people around JFK. We come to know what it is that affected John Kennedy. We come to know Kennedy.

What is of course absolutely required to bring off a slow-motion transcription of an epic is the unqualified confidence of the reader. The reader must have quietly decided, early on, absolutely to rely upon the integrity of the author, who has evolved as a documentarian. The reader has to begin by accepting the professional skills of the researcher in whose hands he finds himself. (*Can we be sure that Reeves got hold here of everything relevant to the telling of this story?*) Reeves inspires such confidence, even as we would give it to the doctor who fiddled with the lesion, whereupon it stopped bleeding. No person alive, or dead, could apodictically advise the reading world which exactly was the critical argument, fact, event that decided JFK, e.g., against bombing Cuba during the missile crisis. And of course even if he had lived to write an autobiographical account, JFK himself

From President Kennedy: Profile of Power, *by Richard Reeves. © 1993 by Reeves–O'Neill, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Touchstone Books/Simon & Schuster.*

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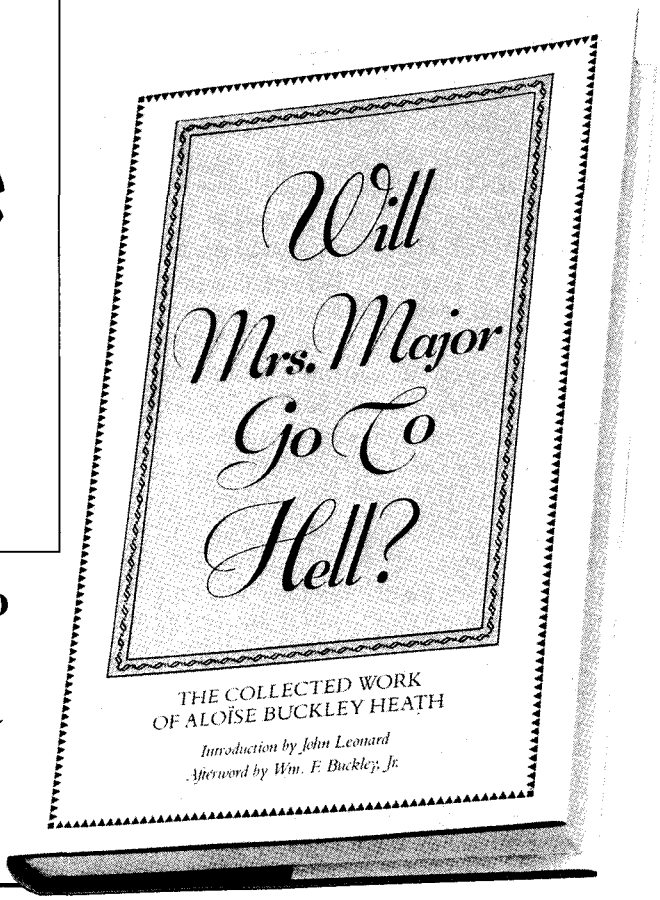
Stop: You've just found the perfect holiday gift.


Will Mrs. Major Go To Hell?
THE COLLECTED WORK OF ALOÏSE BUCKLEY HEATH
Introduction by John Leonard
Afterword by Wm. F. Buckley, Jr.

Aloïse Buckley Heath's **Will Mrs. Major Go to Hell?** – yours directly from *National Review*.

Only $16.95

Here is what the "Book-of-the-Month Club News" said about **Will Mrs. Major Go to Hell?** when it was first published:

> "It may be the warmest, funniest book about suburban family life since *Please Don't Eat the Daisies*, and it suggests that a true talent was lost when Mrs. Heath died at the untimely age of 48. She was one of ten children and had ten of her own, which helps explain why she was busy. The picture she gives of the way her family lived is both touching and hilarious, and she also casts a wry glance at the social scene in such pieces as one entitled 'Ladies Month in the Slicks,' wherein she notes, regarding the suggestion that harried housewives be given a paid-up charm course for Christmas. 'This gift had better be limited to harried housewives you know very well indeed.'"

...and we honestly can't remember when we've seen a more tender, poignant collection of stories. The late Aloïse Buckley Heath (William F. Buckley Jr.'s sister) wrote some absolutely priceless things about her own family, and the early days of *National Review*, plus some marvelously funny satirical observations on our contemporary habits and institutions.

There is something in this book to please every member of your family. You'll meet all the Heath children and encounter with them such American institutions as the New Math and the episode of the riotous carpool.

Don't miss her wonderfully entertaining views on soap operas or her recollections as an inadvertent fund-raiser (successful and highly unorthodox) for Smith College. Her Christmas stories are authentic classics, especially the Heaths' version of a Trapp Family Christmas.

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might not have known—or if he had, might not have revealed—what finally inclined him to do this rather than that. This is why one often learns more from biographies than from autobiographies. More precisely, why one learns different things.

THE CURRENT undertaking is done because this reader profoundly believes in the authenticity of Mr. Reeves' reconstruction. A more cautious way to say this is that if Reeves is sometime in the future proved incorrect about this event or the other, I'd in every case conclude that the available evidence supported Reeves' account at the time he wrote down what is in this book. I'd conclude that a jury assessing all the evidence available would reach the same conclusion Reeves reached. Such confidence in Richard Reeves will of course be disputed, in particular by the (fairly large) company of men and women who will not settle for any historical account of JFK that is less than hagiographical. Courtiers we always have with us. But it is a tribute to this volume that even men professionally concerned to prevent the eternal flame from giving off shadows have been largely mute on its revelations, which come together as an act of portraiture. In some cases the relative quiet of the Knights of Camelot can be attributed to an intelligent indisposition to take Mr. Reeves on, so thorough is his craftsmanship. Sure, here and there trivial mistakes have been spotted—they are in the nature of narrative typos—but none nearly weighty enough to discredit any part of the book, let alone, the book.

The late George Ball wrote an extensive essay in *The New York Review of Books* the purpose of which was to argue that the medication JFK took was not as enfeebling as Reeves here and there suggests it was, or must have been; and that the medicine was never psychologically incapacitating. For instance, it can't be established —Mr. Ball in effect argues—that JFK went this way or that, on this occasion or the other, because a few hours earlier he had been given a shot of amphetamines by the legendary Dr. Feelgood. But it is not left in doubt that Dr. Jacobson indeed did inject the President with heady brews of one kind or another the primary purpose of which was—to make his patient feel good; a quite understandable objective on behalf of someone suffering, as Mr. Kennedy was, from Addison's disease, and other afflictions. We do not know, any more than we can ever know whether this pot-valiant decision or that made by Mr. Kennedy's successor, or for that matter his predecessor, was at some point influenced by alcohol. But the reader is entitled to know what were the medical drugs on which President Kennedy manifestly depended and how they do act on some people who take them.

THE PLAN of this essay is to attempt to set down features of Kennedy's Presidency not widely known, if at all; to record some of the words spoken by Kennedy, or spoken to him by others, which give us a surer sense of his character than we had before; and to focus on some critical points, large and small, that illuminate crises in the Presidency of the most mythogenic American figure of the century.

What follows is the voice of Richard Reeves, except where the typography makes clear otherwise. The introductory headings are mine. Ellipses are generally omitted. The first section focuses on presidential policies, the second on John Fitzgerald Kennedy the man. —WFB

On the Policy Front

1. JFK was uninstructed and uninformed in economics.

—He knew little of banking or corporate America or, for that matter, of the lives of his countrymen. He was forever asking workmen or drivers how much they were paid or how much rent they paid, how much refrigerators cost, how they paid for college.

—"Now tell me again how do I distinguish between monetary and fiscal policy?" the President asked [Economics Advisor Walter] Heller more than once in the first couple of months of the Administration.

"Well," Heller had answered, "monetary is 'M,' like Martin"—William McChesney Martin, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. "So remember Martin and think of the Federal Reserve."

2. JFK was convinced that a growing economy was critical to political success and sought a reduction in the marginal rate of taxation.

—"Point out to me a single instance in the last year when I've said anything that's anti-business [JFK addressed his staff, reacting to an attack on his policies by the president of Pittsburgh Steel]. Ike could have tried to give business a tax break. But he didn't do it. I'm at least trying. We're going to give them better depreciation credit."

—Heller and [economist Paul] Samuelson were devoted to persuading Kennedy that cuts in personal income taxes would increase consumer spending and stimulate the economy enough, without inflation, to fulfill his pledge to get the country moving again—and ensure himself a second term.

They were winning him over, though he could not go that far yet in public. "I asked people to sacrifice," he said to Heller early on, "and you want me to start by announcing that I'm reducing their taxes?" Besides that, tax cuts would increase the national debt, which was already $284 billion. From day one of his Presidency, one of Kennedy's most rigid political goals was to hold the yearly deficit below $12.8 billion, the high during Eisenhower's eight years.

—It was more a domestic speech this time [JFK's

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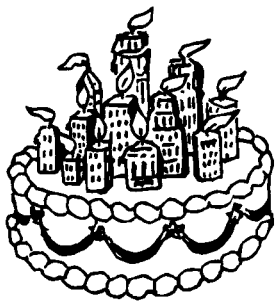
third State of the Union Address, January 14, 1963], and he began by saying: "One step, above all, is essential, the enactment this year of a substantial reduction and revision in federal income taxes."

—"I shall propose a permanent reduction in tax rates [in 1963], which will lower liabilities by $13.5 billion"—a revenue cut equal to almost 15 per cent of the federal budget. "Of this, $11 billion results from reducing individual tax rates, which now range between 20 and 91 per cent, to a more sensible range of 14 to 65 per cent . . . Two and one-half billion dollars results from reducing corporate tax rates from 52 per cent—which gives the government today a majority interest in profits—to the permanent pre–Korean War rate of 47 per cent."



—[In December 1962 he told the Economic Club of New York:] "Surely the lesson of the last decade is that budget deficits are not caused by wild-eyed spenders but by slow economic growth and periodic recessions. . . . In short, it is a paradoxical truth that tax rates are too high today and tax revenues are too low and the soundest way to raise the revenues in the long run is to lower the rates now."

3. JFK's primary concern on the civil-rights issue was politics. He only reluctantly decided that he needed to adopt a pro-civil-rights position.

—As he saw it, he was taking real risks with the tolerance of the Southerners in Congress, and there was no reasonable political point in getting too far ahead of the American people.

—Senator Prescott Bush, a liberal Republican from Connecticut, attached an anti-segregation amendment onto the Kennedy Administration's school-aid bill. The amendment was defeated 61 to 25.

—Nor did he make good on a campaign promise to end racial segregation in new federal housing with "a stroke of the pen"—by signing an executive order. On November 22 [1961], he had met with the Civil Rights Commission and assured them he was just about ready to sign the order. In fact, up in Hyannis Port that Saturday, the President asked [Theodore] Sorensen what he was thinking about when he wrote that promise into a campaign speech.

"It wasn't me," Sorensen said.

"Oh, I guess nobody wrote it," Kennedy replied.

—Guests were flattered [at being invited to the private rooms in the White House during that day's reception for prominent blacks], few realizing that it was a trick to keep them away from photographers in the public rooms. A photograph of the black man in the White House with his white woman [Sammy Davis Jr. and his wife, the blonde Swedish actress Mai Britt] could be a political disaster. "Get them out of there!" Kennedy whispered to one aide after another. Still upstairs, he told one assistant after another to tell his wife to take Mai Britt aside so that the Davises would not be together before the photographers were pushed out of the room.

Jacqueline Kennedy refused. She was so angry at the suggestion she did not want to go downstairs at all, and the formal reception began without the President and his wife. He was still upstairs trying to talk her into going down. She finally did, agreeing to sit next to her husband for a formal portrait with Vice President Johnson and his wife, Mrs. Robert Kennedy, and 11 Negro leaders. Then she stood up, said she did not feel well, and left in tears.

—"[JFK] thinks that if he does more than he has to about Negroes, he can forget about being President for eight years," [Fr. Theodore] Hesburgh [a member of the Civil Rights Commission] told [Berl] Bernhard [the staff director of the Commission].

—The country is not ready [for comprehensive civil-rights legislation], Kennedy repeated, telling [Senator Hubert] Humphrey and others: "When I feel that there's necessity for a congressional action with a chance of getting that congressional action, then I will recommend it to the Congress."

—He declined an invitation to speak [at the 1963 March on Washington], because he thought it was impossible to craft a speech that would satisfy both the crowd at the Memorial and a nation watching on live television. He also refused to meet with [A. Philip] Randolph [president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters], [Martin Luther] King, and [NAACP leader] Roy Wilkins before the March to avoid photographs that would make him look bad if there was trouble in the streets. And he wanted to make sure that no Negro leader would give him a list of demands before the speeches and then denounce him from the Memorial if he turned them down.

—Polls were still showing him losing six or seven white votes for every Negro one he gained.

—Wiretaps on [Martin Luther King's] office and home phones were approved by Robert Kennedy on October 7 [1963]. All the while, too, the FBI was continuing to build up its Kennedy files, with the newest entries including not only Mary Meyer, a regular White House visitor [and JFK sleep-in] during the past eight months, but also a 27-year-old German woman named Ellen Rometsch, the wife of an Army sergeant assigned to the West German Embassy since April 1961. She was, it seemed, a call girl, paid by and reporting to [LBJ protégé Bobby] Baker.

—At the Lincoln Day gala [in 1963], the new chairman [of the Civil Rights Commission], John Hannah, had told Kennedy that the commission intended to prepare a special report on the situation in Mississippi.

"You're making my life difficult," Kennedy said. "I've read this law and I know you can do anything you want to, but I would appreciate if you didn't."

That was in private. A couple of weeks later, at a press conference, [JFK] was asked whether he thought the commission should delay Mississippi hearings and he answered: "No. Any hearing that they feel advances the cause or meets the responsibility which has been en-

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trusted to them by law, then they should go ahead and hold it."

—While Kennedy was still with Wilkins, [Assistant Attorney General] Burke Marshall told King that he would have to get rid of two of his advisors, Stanley Levison, the New York lawyer, and one of King's executive assistants, Hunter Pitts O'Dell. The Federal Bureau of Investigation had concluded the two men were Communists. "A paid agent of the Soviet Communist apparatus," Marshall said of Levison. King implied that he did not believe that, he asked for the government's proof. With that, he was passed on to Robert Kennedy.

Robert Kennedy believed Hoover; at least, he believed that even the possibility of King's being linked to Communists might bring down King and the President, too. So, he was not in the mood to argue.

When it was clear that King did not believe either Marshall or Robert Kennedy, the President took over. He asked King to take a walk with him in the Rose Garden. He put a hand on King's shoulder, something he rarely did, and said: "I assume you know you're under very close surveillance." He mentioned Levison and O'Dell by name, and said: "They're Communists, you've got to get rid of them."

—[Robert Kennedy] mentioned Bayard Rustin, the man [A. Philip] Randolph had chosen to organize the march, who had once been a Communist and had once been arrested on a sodomy charge. Leaning toward [Marietta] Tree [a social friend and UN delegate], he said: "So, you're down here for that old black fairy's anti-Kennedy demonstration."

Mrs. Tree tried to deflect the attorney general by asking what he thought of Martin Luther King Jr. "He's not a serious person," said Robert Kennedy. She had no idea what that could mean. The attorney general was operating on a different level, having seen transcripts produced by the FBI's taps and bugs on King's telephones and in the hotel rooms the Justice Department helped find for march leaders in Washington.

"If the country knew what we know about King's goings-on, he'd be finished," the attorney general told Mrs. Tree.

She decided not to pursue the conversation.

Five weeks earlier, Attorney General Robert Kennedy had authorized the FBI to tap the phones of King and of Clarence Jones, the New York attorney he had first met during the angry meeting with James Baldwin.

—The tapping order was the same one he had proposed himself on July 16 [1963], then rejected on July 25. Two weeks later, on October 21, before the home tap was in use, Robert Kennedy had signed a second order authorizing taps on the four phone lines into King's offices at the Southern Christian Leadership Council in Atlanta, this time ordering that the material collected by the tap be reviewed in thirty days, to determine whether the eavesdropping should be continued.

On October 25, the attorney general discovered that the FBI was circulating a classified memo through military intelligence agencies and the office of the secretary of defense, describing King as "An unprincipled man . . . who is knowingly, willingly, and regularly taking guidance from Communists." [Robert Kennedy ordered Hoover to recall the memo, but copies of it circulated widely.]

—He was also losing the support of some Northern liberals who thought he was moving too slowly. John Roche, who succeeded Arthur Schlesinger as the president of Americans for Democratic Action, had attacked Kennedy in the current issue of *ADA World*, calling him a technocratic liberal: "JFK is totally dedicated to managerial politics the end point of which is to beautify cities by replacing Negroes with trees."

—He was going to have to do what he most wanted to avoid, propose comprehensive civil-rights legislation in his first term. And there was going to be trouble if it passed, and worse if it did not.

—[George Reedy, assistant to Vice President Lyndon Johnson, wrote a memo designed for JFK in which he said:] "The Negroes are going to be satisfied with nothing less than a convincing demonstration that the President is on their side. The backbone of white resistance is not going to be broken until the segregationists realize that the total moral force of the United States is arrayed against them."

—Could they persuade American business, particularly Southern business, to employ Negroes? The President answered his own question: "I called in businessmen to ask them to hire Negroes. You know what they said to me? Why should *we* hire Negroes? *You* don't hire Negroes." Then he pulled out a sheet of paper [Assistant Attorney General] Lee White had prepared for him on federal employment in one Southern city, Nashville: "Four Negroes in the 405-man Treasury Department offices; two of 249 Agricultural employees; no Negroes working in Labor and Commerce Department offices."

—But the meeting was taken over by a former Freedom Rider named Jerome Smith, who had been on the bus that had left Montgomery on the morning of May 22, 1961. He stilled the others with angry stories of being beaten by Southern police. "I want to vomit being in the same room with you," he told Robert Kennedy; he said it made him sick to be begging for his legal rights from the man who was supposed to be enforcing them.

The New York meeting lasted three hours. The Negroes demanded a public gesture from the White House. Perhaps the President should personally escort the two Negro students waiting to begin summer classes at the University of Alabama.

—"I don't think you can get by without it," Robert Kennedy said. The time had come to prepare comprehensive civil-rights legislation. It was time for John Kennedy to choose sides.

—That was it. Legislation would follow, but, at last, the President of the United States had chosen sides.

—Kennedy's approval rating in Gallup polls had

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dropped from 76 per cent to 59 per cent during 1963, and he recited those numbers to dampen a certain overconfidence in the White House. That decline, [Census Bureau Director Richard] Scammon said, was attributable almost entirely to civil rights.

4. JFK was duplicitous on the matter of political assassinations sponsored by the United States Government.

—The CIA had been plotting to "eliminate" two leaders in the Caribbean: Fidel Castro and Generalissimo Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina of the Dominican Republic.

—The last official thing [JFK] had done about the assassination plot was to approve a coded cable that same day to the CIA station in Ciudad Trujillo, saying: "We must not run risk of U.S. association with political assassination, since U.S. as a matter of general policy cannot condone assassination. This last principle is overriding and must prevail in doubtful situation. . . ." But the last sentence made it clear that what the President wanted was plausible deniability: "Continue to inform dissident elements of U.S. support for their position."

—[What the plotters needed was] guns, ammunition, and hand grenades. The weapons were delivered to [Henry] Dearborn [U.S. deputy chief of mission in Ciudad Trujillo] in a U.S. diplomatic pouch. He gave them to the assassins.

—"Get off your ass about Cuba!" Robert Kennedy shouted at [General Edward] Lansdale and everyone else in the room the next day, November 4 [1961]. The attorney general was the chairman of something called the "Special Group (Augmented)," which was really a White House team trying to get rid of Fidel Castro any way they could. He wanted Lansdale as his operating officer and he got him.

"The Cuban problem carries top priority in the U.S. Government," Robert Kennedy said. "No time, money, effort or manpower is to be spared."

—In public as in private, the President attempted to distance himself from assassination talk, which was common conversation, not only in the White House but in newspapers and at Georgetown dinner parties.

—On November 30 [1961], the President sent a memo to Secretary of State [Dean] Rusk, ordering him to "Use our available assets to help Cuba overthrow the Communist regime." That day he officially appointed Lansdale as executive director of the Special Group (Augmented), "The Cuba Project," run by Robert Kennedy, with an action arm called "Operation Mongoose."

—The first [call was] made by William Harvey, the CIA agent who had run ZR/RIFLE, the agency's program to develop stand-by assassination capability. He was in charge of Task Force W, an agency unit created at the beginning of 1962 to try to overthrow Castro. He was in a rage over a short memorandum that had been sent out the day before by General Lansdale, chief of operations of "Operation Mongoose." Mongoose had been created at the end of 1961 with this goal: "In keeping with the spirit of the presidential memorandum of 30 November 1961, the United States will help the people of Cuba overthrow the Communist regime from within Cuba and institute a new government with which the United States can live in peace."

The Lansdale memo that enraged Harvey was only a call for a Mongoose meeting later on August 14, but it was classified "TOP SECRET, SPECIAL HANDLING NOFORN."

[General Lansdale's memo read:] "In compliance with the desires and guidance expressed in the 10 August policy meeting on Operation Mongoose we will hold an Operational Representatives work session in my office, at 1400 hours, Tuesday, 14 August. Papers required from each of you for the Tuesday meeting:

"Mr. Harvey: Intelligence, Political (splitting the regime), including liquidation of leaders. . . ."

Harvey's angry memorandum on the memorandum was [directed] to Richard Helms, who had succeeded Richard Bissell in February as the CIA's deputy director for plans. It was Bissell who had assigned Harvey to Task Force W at the end of 1961, telling him he was under more and more pressure from the White House to get rid of Castro. Now Harvey told Helms:

"Reference is made to our conversation on 13 August 1962, concerning the memorandum of that date from General Lansdale. Attached is a copy of this memorandum. . . . The question of assassination, particularly of Fidel Castro, was brought up by Secretary [of Defense Robert] McNamara at the meeting of the Special Group (Augmented) in Secretary Rusk's office on 10 August. It was the obvious consensus at that meeting, in answer to a comment by Mr. Ed Murrow, that this is not a subject which has been made a matter of official record."

So, as he had after the Bay of Pigs, McNamara was talking about the assassination of Castro, but this time it was on paper. The Lansdale memo Harvey sent to his superiors at the CIA read: "Upon receipt of the attached memorandum, I called Lansdale's office and pointed out the inadmissibility and stupidity of putting this type of comment in writing in such a document. I advised that, as far as CIA was concerned, we would write no document pertaining to this and would participate in no open meeting discussing it."

Harvey never had any doubt in his own mind that in planning for Castro's demise he was acting on orders from the highest authority, the President.

—Nevertheless, uncertain about what exactly was new and different in Cuba, [President] Kennedy issued a National Security Action Memorandum, NSAM-181, the next day, August 23 [1962], a "Top Secret and Sensitive" document written by [National Security Advisor McGeorge] Bundy and available in full to only five men —Rusk, McNamara, Robert Kennedy, [CIA Director John] McCone, and [General] Max Taylor:

"The President has directed that the following actions and studies be undertaken in the light of evidence of new bloc activity in Cuba. . . . the line of activity projected for Operation Mongoose Plan B-plus should be developed with all possible speed. (Action: General Taylor). . . ."

—So the old Special Group with a new name began to

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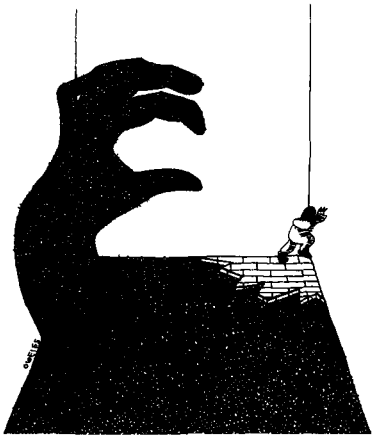
meet every Tuesday morning with the same old purpose—getting rid of Fidel Castro. Robert Kennedy, Sorensen, McCone, [Treasury Secretary Douglas] Dillon, Taylor, and [Undersecretary of Defense] Roswell Gilpatric were all members of the ten-member Standing Group, convening without staff in the White House Situation Room. McGeorge Bundy was the chairman. "We agreed [Bundy reported to the President] on the desirability of not spreading knowledge of covert operations any wider than absolutely necessary, if we are to preserve the principle of deniability."

—But, at the same time, the CIA was still recruiting assassins. In fact, a ballpoint pen with a poisoned needle designed to kill Castro was scheduled to be delivered to a potential assassin on November 22 [1963—the day JFK was assassinated] by Desmond FitzGerald, who had replaced William Harvey as director of Task Force W.



—[Schlesinger wrote in a memorandum, April 1961:] "When lies must be told, they should be told by subordinate officials. At no point should the President be asked to lend himself to the cover operation. There seems to me merit in Secretary Rusk's suggestion that someone other than the President make the final decision and do so in his absence—someone whose head can later be placed on the block if things go terribly wrong." One Schlesinger "failure option" was to put the blame on the CIA as "errant idealists and soldiers-of-fortune working on their own."

5. JFK was badly informed about economic progress within the Soviet Union and slow to catch on to what was actually happening there.

—[In June 1963 he said:] "But we can still hail the Russian people for their many achievements—in science and space, in economic and industrial growth, in culture and in acts of courage. . . ."

—One set of government growth projections, based on CIA estimates [made in 1960], indicated that the gross national product of the Soviet Union would be triple the U.S. GNP by the year 2000.

—By August 1961, Kennedy was beginning to realize too that his own warnings about the Soviet economy overtaking U.S. production were as exaggerated as had been his missile-gap rhetoric.

6. JFK's volatile showings on the voter-popularity charts deeply affected and influenced him.

—The midterm election was no landslide. The Democrats won 52.7 per cent of the overall vote, compared with 56.3 per cent in the 1958 midterm election and 55 per cent of the congressional total in 1960. The turnout was high, 5.8 million voters more than in 1958, but 4.2 million of the new voters cast their ballots for Republicans.

—"There are limits to the number of defeats I can defend in one 12-month period," he had told [John Kenneth] Galbraith. "I've had the Bay of Pigs, pulling out of Laos, and I can't accept a third."

—At home, Kennedy's personal approval rating, which had been 66 per cent in the August Gallup Poll, rose to 77 per cent after the Soviets began dismantling the missiles of October.

—The President, no slouch himself at telling men what they wanted to hear, left [Senate Majority Leader Mike] Mansfield with this thought: "If I tried to pull out completely now from Vietnam, we would have another Joe McCarthy Red scare on our hands, but I can do it after I'm re-elected. So we had better make damn sure that I am re-elected."

—Then he told [David] Lawrence, who was also the chairman of the Democratic Party of Pennsylvania, that he was going to need every Northern state he could get in 1964. The way things were going in Alabama, Kennedy said, "I can kiss the South good-bye."

—The President thought he was already in the spotlight. The last Gallup Poll had indicated that 63 per cent of Americans disapproved of the March [on Washington], and that 38 per cent thought he was pushing too fast on integration. At the same time the Harris Poll estimated that Kennedy, who had won election by roughly 118,000 votes, was currently losing 4.5 million votes because of his stands on civil rights, most of them in the South and border states, and could expect to pick up fewer than 600,000 new Negro voters, even including those allowed to register for the first time.

—"I'm not going to have a library if I only have one term," he said. "Nobody will give a damn."

—Kennedy's approval rating in Gallup polls had dropped from 76 per cent to 59 per cent during 1963.

But the latest horse-race polls showed Kennedy with a percentage lead of 55 to 39 over the current [Republican] favorite, Senator Barry Goldwater.

—The Belden Poll showed that his approval rate in the state [Texas] was just 50 per cent, down from 76 per cent in 1962.

—For the first time [September 1963] he felt sure that he was going to be re-elected.

7. JFK's thoughts on Vietnam and its importance to the West oscillated wildly.

—Back in Saigon, [General Maxwell] Taylor sent an "Eyes Only" cable to Kennedy recommending that the flood be used as a pretext for sending in six to eight thousand U.S. troops.

—The question that drew the shortest answer that day [January 15, 1962, at the presidential press conference] was:

"Mr. President, are American troops now in combat in Vietnam?"

"No."

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That was not true.

—The return cables from the White House to Saigon that day, August 31 [1963], ordered the embassy and the military mission to recall and destroy all copies of the messages received and sent during the week that began with the cable of August 24 [calling, in effect, for the overthrow of Diem by military coup]. In Washington, the same orders, over the President's name, were sent to the State Department, the CIA, and the Defense Department: Destroy all coup cables.

—The ambassador [Henry Cabot Lodge] recommended that [South Vietnamese General] Big Minh be told directly that the United States would not thwart his plans and would, in fact, help make them—all except assassination details.

Alarm bells went off at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. "Assassination" was supposed to be kept out of written records. As soon as [CIA Director] McCone saw the cable, he cabled Lodge: "We certainly cannot be in the position of stimulating or approving, or supporting assassination, but on the other hand, we are in no way responsible for stopping every such threat of which we might have partial knowledge."

McCone called [JFK] and asked to come over to the White House. Robert Kennedy was with the President in the Oval Office when he arrived. McCone avoided using the word "assassination"—the President had to be able to deny ever talking about it—but, he said, he wanted to make clear his own understanding of the CIA's role: "We are collecting information on coup planning, but not attempting to direct it."

—Tran Trung Dung [a South Vietnamese former assistant minister of defense] had told Lodge one more thing: "The generals are planning the complete removal of the Ngo family."

—[Taken from the text of a recorded telephone call from Diem to Lodge, November 1, 1963, the day before Diem's assassination. Lodge tells Diem:] "You have certainly done your duty. As I told you only this morning, I admire your courage and your great contributions to your country. . . ."

Less than two hours later Ambassador Lodge sent a cable received in Washington at 7:55 A.M.: "Following message is being passed to General 'Big Minh': 'Generals will be received at Embassy after coup is over.'"

—[The standard-issue, ghost-written] Army reply [to surviving family members of GIs killed in Vietnam] did not satisfy Kennedy and he wrote his own, including these thoughts: "Americans are in Vietnam because we have determined that this country must not fall under Communist domination.

"It is also apparent that the Communist attempt to take over Vietnam is only part of a larger plan for bringing the entire area of Southeast Asia under their domination. Though it is only a small part of the area geographically, Viet Nam is now the most crucial. Your brother was in Vietnam because the threat to the Viet Namese people is, in the long run, a threat to the Free World community, and ultimately a threat to us. . . ."

—He said [at his news conference on April 24, 1963, when asked about the "Domino Theory"]: "If Laos fell into Communist hands, it would increase the danger along the northern borders of Thailand. It would put additional pressure on Cambodia and would put additional pressure on Viet Nam, which in itself would put additional pressure on Malaya. So I do accept the view that there is an interrelationship in these countries . . ."

—[From a CBS interview with Walter Cronkite, September 2, 1963:] "All we can do is help, and we are making it very clear, but I don't agree with those who say we should withdraw. That would be a great mistake. I know people don't like Americans to be engaged in this kind of an effort. . . . We made this effort to defend Europe. Now Europe is quite secure. We also have to participate—we may not like it—in the defense of Asia."

—"Mr. President, [asked David Brinkley on September 9, 1963,] have you had any reason to doubt this so-called 'Domino Theory,' that if South Viet-Nam falls, the rest of Southeast Asia will go behind it?"

"No, I believe it," the President said.

—[From a White House press conference, July 17, 1963:] "We are not going to withdraw from that effort. In my opinion, for us to withdraw from that effort would mean a collapse not only of South Viet-Nam, but Southeast Asia."

—That evening [April 24, 1963] over a drink, Kennedy brought up Vietnam again with Charlie Bartlett: "We don't have a prayer of staying in Vietnam. Those people hate us. They are going to throw our asses out of there at almost any point. But I can't give up a piece of territory like that to the Communists and then get the American people to re-elect me."

"He's totally out to sea about what to do in Viet Nam," Bartlett said later.

8. JFK was baffled by the nuclear question and even considered a pre-emptive strike against China.

—That [U.S. nuclear superiority], of course, was the opposite of what Kennedy had said during the campaign. "We are facing a gap on which we are gambling with our survival," was one of his alarming campaign lines.

—Kennedy knew now that the missile gap overwhelmingly favored the United States. Still, that did not matter much. After Vienna, he had concluded that for all practical purposes there was no such thing as nuclear superiority. There was no difference between superiority and parity or anything remotely close to parity.

—The American military and some scientists had been pushing for new U.S. tests. And, in fact, the President had secretly ordered preparations to resume testing, to be ready to respond to the politics of the moment.

He had ordered the paperwork on that decision withdrawn, so he would have the option of saying he had

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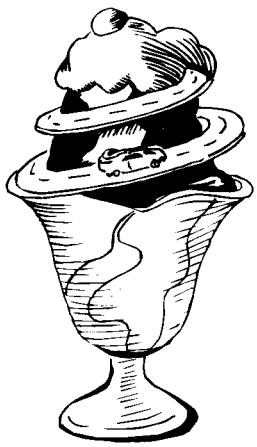
made the preparation decision later than he actually had.

—From the new film, the CIA and McNamara and Gilpatric concluded that the Soviets had only a few primitive ICBMs, perhaps just four 100-ton SS-6s.

Kennedy knew all that. The United States, with 185 ICBMs, and with more than 3,400 nuclear warheads on submarines, and bombers capable of striking deep into the Soviet Union, had overwhelming nuclear superiority.

—So, still peppering his staff with memos telling them to figure out a way to explain away his old "missile gap" speeches, the President decided to lay out the true extent of U.S. military superiority.



—[Edward] Teller's specific argument was that the United States needed to test in the atmosphere to begin development of an anti-missile system which would shield the country like a great umbrella.

—One of the reasons for keeping this secret [a contingent U.S. plan to initiate a nuclear strike if necessary to prevent a Soviet invasion of Europe] was that the American people believed the United States would never be the first to use nuclear weapons. But that was not true, not in Kennedy's mind, particularly not after the previous week.

—During a 1989 Moscow conference on the Cuban missile crisis, the director of the Institute of Military History of the Defense Ministry, General Dmitri Volkogonov, said the number of Soviet ICBMs aimed at the United States in late 1962 was actually only twenty. Some Soviets, including Sergei Khrushchev, son of the late premier, also stated there were warheads on the island during the 1962 crisis—a claim U.S. intelligence never could verify because aerial photography never clearly revealed storage bunkers.

—Kennedy told his audience [at American University], "[We live] in an age when a single nuclear weapon contains almost ten times the explosive force delivered by all of the allied air forces in the Second World War."

—In Washington, there was also an astonished and belated realization that the Chinese Communists were pressuring Khrushchev and the Soviets to renounce talk of co-existence with the Americans. The Soviet premier, it seemed, believed that he had as much or more to fear from a nuclear China as the American President did. It now seemed possible that Khrushchev would soon have to choose between dialogue with Washington [and] dialectic comradeship with a belligerent Peking. The Chinese were already on the move, involved in a border war with India in the Himalayas. Again and again, in private, Kennedy said that his greatest fear was Chinese nuclear weapons, and he had an almost romantic attachment to the idea that, somehow, the Americans and the Russians could combine to block China's nuclear programs.

—The "U.S. Action," as outlined in [Undersecretary of State Averell] Harriman's briefing books, was classified "Top Secret." It was a discussion of an alliance between the United States and Soviet Union with the specific goal of preventing China from developing nuclear weapons, including this: "Radical steps, in cooperation with the USSR, to prevent further proliferation of nuclear capabilities [and] Soviet, or possibly joint US–USSR, use of military forces against China"—presumably a joint air strike against China's nuclear facilities.

The Personal Kennedy

9. JFK was a charming human being.

—Men and women fell in love with him. And politics, the career he had chosen, was a business that magnified charm and institutionalized seduction.

—"He's an artist who paints with other people's lives," said Polly Kraft, the wife of one of the campaign speechwriters, Joseph Kraft. "He raises the spirit of a room. 'Come along with me!' he says—and we all do."

10. JFK was easily bored.

—And boredom was the worst sin. Sometimes its name was Adlai Stevenson or Chester Bowles, the well-meaning, long-winded dons of American liberalism.

—These meetings were for political stroking. Most of the [senators] bored Kennedy, as they had even when he was one of them. Whenever he could get away with it, Kennedy shrugged off congressional concerns, and most domestic issues, too, handing them off to [subordinates].

11. JFK was personally vain.

—Kennedy took photographs seriously, spending hours looking at himself on glossy paper before deciding which image the public might see.

—"Sure it's a big job," he had said in an interview at the end of 1960, before he had taken office. "But I don't know anybody who can do it any better than I can. Besides, the pay is pretty good."

—He was shameless in exploiting his family and children, using them to take over the slots newspapers usually reserved for photos of local kids and their puppies.

—They were getting nowhere [in drafting an answer to Khrushchev], partly because the President thought of himself as a master of words.

12. JFK's cultural tastes were undeveloped.

—A new sound system pumped out the country and western music and show tunes that he liked.

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—The President preferred Sinatra and show tunes to Stravinsky.

13. JFK was undisciplined and lazy.

—[The *New York Times*' James] Reston asked him about his vision of the future, what kind of world he would like to help make. Kennedy looked at Reston for a long moment, seeming a little sad. "I haven't had time to think about that yet," he answered.

—[National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy wrote to JFK in a memorandum after the Bay of Pigs:] "The National Security Council, for example, really cannot work for you unless you authorize work schedules that do not get upset from day to day. Calling three meetings in five days is foolish—and putting them off for six weeks at a time is just as bad.

"Truman and Eisenhower did their daily dozen in foreign affairs the first thing in the morning, and a couple of weeks ago you asked me to begin to meet you on this basis. I have succeeded in catching you on three mornings, for a total of about 8 minutes, and I conclude that this is not really how you like to begin the day. Moreover, 6 of the 8 minutes were given not to what I had for *you* but what you had for *me* from Marguerite Higgins, David Lawrence, Scotty Reston, and others."

Bundy went on like that, scolding his boss:

"Right now it is so hard to get to you with anything not urgent and immediate that about half of the papers and reports you personally ask for are never shown to you because by the time you are available you clearly have lost interest in them. . . . Above all you are entitled to feel confident that (a) there is no part of government in the national security area that is not watched over closely by someone from your own staff, and (b) there is no major problem of policy that is not out where you can see it and give a proper stimulus to those who should be attacking it."

14. JFK (along with Bobby) was given to authoritarian and imperious practices.

—Of course, it was not really a joke. The FBI and the CIA had installed dozens of wiretaps and listening devices on orders and requests from the attorney general. Transcripts of secret tapes of steel executives, congressmen, lobbyists and reporters routinely ended up on the President's desk. The targets ranged from writers who criticized the President—Hanson Baldwin of the *New York Times*; Lloyd Norman of *Newsweek*; Bernard Fall of Howard University; and Victor Lasky, a conservative author—to members of Kennedy's own staff: his Air Force assistant, General Godfrey McHugh; and Robert Amory, the CIA's man on the National Security Council. And the White House had had its own taping system installed by the Secret Service with help from military aides early in 1962, on Kennedy's orders. When he thought of it, the President used hidden switches in the Oval Office, the Cabinet Room, and his living room in Hyannis Port to secretly record meetings and phone calls. Among other reasons, the President wanted the transcripts as notes for his own memoirs.

—He picked up the phone and got Newton Minow, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission: "Did you see that goddamn thing on Huntley–Brinkley? I thought they were supposed to be our friends. I want you to do something about that. You do something about that."

—"The f---ing *Herald Tribune* is at it again," Kennedy said that morning in an angry telephone call to his press secretary. Then he canceled the 22 *Trib* subscriptions that came to the White House each morning.

Canceling the *Herald Tribune* was a stupid thing to do. Cartoonists and comedians around the country were making fun of the President—and his aides made things a bit worse by whispering that, of course, the President read the *Trib* secretly.

—[He told *New York Times* publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger:] "I wish like hell that you'd get [David] Halberstam out of there [Vietnam]."

—He was asked next about Robert Frost and reports that the poet was carrying a private message from Khrushchev, and he responded: "I have not received his message, though I hope to see him shortly. . . ." Actually, Kennedy had no intention of seeing Frost. He was still angry that the old man had added to the impression that he was weak and indecisive.

—Robert Frost died on January 23 [1963]. He had gone into a hospital in Boston just before Christmas. It seemed everyone of import in the world had sent what they knew were final messages—Khrushchev, the Pope, Robert Kennedy; but not John Kennedy. [Interior Secretary] Stewart Udall asked the President to call or just to say something, but Kennedy was still angry about Frost's casting doubt on American resolve.

—Kennedy had already asked Ted Sorensen to have the Justice Department do some checking into the activities of the Rockefeller Foundation and other family enterprises. At the Army–Navy Football Game, on November 26 [1962] in Philadelphia, Kennedy sat with Roswell Gilpatric, who had known Nelson Rockefeller and his brothers since they were all children. Kennedy did what he always did with Gilpatric: he questioned him about Rockefeller—about the family, their homes, the foundations, their wives, their children, their hobbies. What about Rocky's girlfriends?

There were a lot of them, Gilpatric said.

"How does he get away with it?" asked Kennedy, pressing for details.

—Robert Kennedy, as usual, hit the hardest, summoning a federal grand jury and sending FBI agents to offices and homes of steelmen.

—"We're going for broke," Robert Kennedy told his men [in referring to the steel-company executives]. "Their expense accounts and where they'd been and what they were doing. I told the FBI to interview them

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all—march into their offices . . . subpoena their personal records . . . subpoena their company records . . . We can't lose this."

FBI agents took the attorney general at his word, telephoning steel executives in the middle of the night.

—"We haven't spent as much f---ing time on anything since Cuba," Kennedy joked after a long session with the [*Boston*] *Globe*'s Washington bureau chief, Robert Healy [on how to handle the news story about to break, that Teddy had cheated at Harvard]. The President and the bureau chief worked out a statement, which Edward Kennedy repeated in a staged interview, admitting that another student had taken a freshman Spanish exam for him. The *Globe* broke the cheating story on March 30, under the gentlest of headlines: "Ted Kennedy Tells About Harvard Examination Incident."

—"[Congressman] Roland Libonati is sticking it right up us," said [JFK].

"He is?" [Chicago Mayor Richard] Daley said with surprise in his voice.

"Yeah, because he's standing with the extreme liberals who are going to end up with no bill at all. Then when we put together a bill with the Republicans which gives us about everything we wanted, and he says 'No.' "

"He'll vote for it," said the mayor. "He'll vote for any goddamned thing you want."

Kennedy laughed.

"Where is he?" the mayor asked. "Is he there?"

"Well, he's in the other room."

"Tell Kenny [O'Donnell] to put him on the wire here."

"Okay," Kennedy said, then thought better of it. "Or would you rather get him when he gets back to his office? That's better, otherwise, 'cause he might think . . ."

"The last time I . . ." Daley said. "I told him, 'Now look, I don't give a goddamned what it is, you vote for anything the President wants. This is the way it will be and this is the way we want it and that's the way it's gonna be.' "

"That'd be good," Kennedy said. "Thanks, Dick."

—He was mad as hell. In the middle of the Medicare struggle, the president of the AMA, Dr. Leonard Larson, asked for a meeting with the President to discuss their differences. "Forget it," Kennedy said. Why not? A meeting suggested compromise, he said, and a photograph suggested a meeting of equals. He was not of a mind to give either to Dr. Larson. He had the same reaction when Walter Heller asked him to pose for the cameras at a reunion of past chairmen of the Council of Economic Advisors, including Truman's man, Leon Keyserling, and Eisenhower's, Arthur Burns. "Burns and Keyserling are kicking me in the balls every day and I'm not going to give them a platform to do it more successfully," he told Heller.

—[Ben] Bradlee had been quoted in a *Look* Magazine article early in August [1962] on press coverage of the White House: "It's almost impossible to write a story they like. Even if a story is quite favorable to their side, they'll find one paragraph to quibble with."

—In Rome, Kennedy dispatched one of the most loyal of his old friends, Lem Billings, to search the city's antiquity shops for small items to bring back home. He figured that Billings must know about such things because he had a degree in art history from Princeton. With only ninety minutes to search the city, Billings was assigned an aide to the president of Italy and a famous archaeologist. The three of them raced from shop to shop, with the Italian official warning the proprietors of the consequences of selling fakes to the President of the United States. They collected 27 pieces from back rooms, none of them on display, and brought them back for Kennedy's consideration. He chose two, paying $900 for a little Greek horse from the sixth century B.C., and $500 for a life-size head, a Roman copy of Praxiteles' Hermes. The rest were sent back.

"God, I don't know why we didn't get more," Kennedy told Billings on the plane back to Washington. Billings telephoned the Italian president's office after they landed, and within a couple of days the Italian ambassador delivered a treasure of statues and jewelry. The President selected a few more pieces, giving them to his wife, then passed the collection on to Billings and other friends to make their own choices. Nothing went back to Rome this time.

15. JFK's sexual self-indulgence was pathological.

—The routine of clandestine comings and goings had to be taught to the willing among the women Kennedy regularly propositioned, often within a couple of minutes of introduction. Some of the action was somewhat graceful—or at least roses were sent with a card that said: "Friends of Evelyn Lincoln." Some of it was in the back seats of cars. Many of the women he asked said yes, but if they did not, Kennedy asked again . . .

"We're a bunch of virgins, married virgins," said one young staff member, Fred Dutton, the secretary of the Cabinet. "And he's like God, f---ing anybody he wants to anytime he feels like it."

—Mary Meyer, a Georgetown artist who was the ex-wife of a CIA official, Cord Meyer, . . . flew up with the President. They had been sleeping together for several months; usually she came to the White House whenever Jacqueline Kennedy was out of town.

—Some of the fun ended with Hoover's formal visit to the Oval Office. Two weeks later, on April 4, the CIA's formal request to the FBI to forgo prosecution of [Sam] Giancana and [Robert] Maheu was worded this way: "Any prosecution in the matter would endanger sensitive sources and methods used in a duly authorized intelligence project and would not be in the national interest."

—Keeping the secrets was part of the price of admission.

—She [Dr. Janet Travell] was injecting her novocaine mixtures into the President's back as often as five and six times a day.

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—Another possible side effect [of corticosteroids, used to treat Addison's disease] was heightened sexual desire. The side effects of [Dr. Jacobson's amphetamine mixtures] were more dangerous: an exaggerated sense of power and capabilities, and the debilitating symptoms of classic paranoid schizophrenia, then slow death by poisoning. It was not Kennedy's doctors but his brother Robert Kennedy who suspected such dangers and tried to get rid of Dr. Jacobson.

—As the European trip was being planned, the President had asked Rusk if he knew of a beautiful and a secluded place in Italy for a private matter. Rusk did. He had been president of the Rockefeller Foundation, which owned Villa Serbelloni on Lake Como, once the grand vacation home of a Milanese merchant prince. Kennedy said he wanted the villa on the night of June 30 and he wanted it empty—no servants, no staff, no Secret Service. [Dave] Powers and [Ken] O'Donnell would be there to handle any problems, that was part of their jobs. But somebody didn't get the message. It soon became apparent that the resident director of Rockefeller programs at the villa and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. John Marshall, were intending to stay on the property, moving into guest quarters.

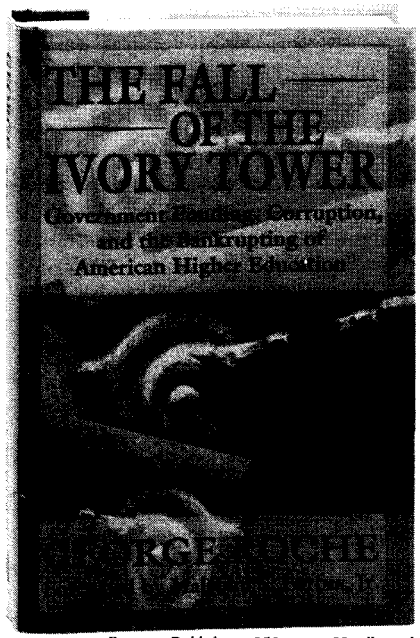
"Get them out of there," Kennedy said, and the State Department was on the way. The Marshalls left and soon afterward a lady of some note in Europe arrived. Rusk returned in the morning. "How was it?" asked Rusk, who did not approve of some of Kennedy's habits.

"Wonderful," Kennedy said. "Absolutely wonderful."

[*From the* New York Times, *March 30, 1985*] *Hempstead, L.I.—For the last two days, white-haired former members of the Kennedy Administration have mingled with younger scholars on the campus of Hofstra University, affectionately recalling the youthful John F. Kennedy and the zest and style with which he touched the hearts of his countrymen.*

The conference on his Presidency has been a celebration, a gathering of the clan: Theodore C. Sorensen, McGeorge Bundy, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Walter W. Heller, and many others. Their faces still shine when they speak of him. □

The quotations above, in the order in which they appear, can be found on the following pages of Richard Reeves' book (which has just been published in paperback): ***Section 1)*** *295, 295;* ***2)*** *317, 278, 451, 452, 453;* ***3)*** *133, 133, 270, 464, 468, 468, 581, 626, 626, 469, 530, 571, 627, 655, 495, 500, 501, 505, 515, 522, 655;* ***4)*** *140, 141, 142, 263, 266, 267, 335–37, 342, 473, 660, 85;* ***5)*** *514, 54, 231;* ***6)*** *429, 261, 426, 444, 492, 579, 654, 655, 661, 607;* ***7)*** *255, 280, 577, 617–18, 640, 646, 449–50, 484, 588–89, 592, 543, 484–85;* ***8)*** *58, 222, 224, 228–29, 246, 555, 179, 376, 513, 509–10, 547–48;* ***9)*** *22, 477;* ***10)*** *53, 276;* ***11)*** *64, 274, 279, 417;* ***12)*** *244, 475;* ***13)*** *225, 113–14;* ***14)*** *304, 300, 303, 636, 352, 455, 435, 298, 299, 324, 630, 328, 348, 540;* ***15)*** *290–91, 606, 292, 292, 242, 243, 539.*



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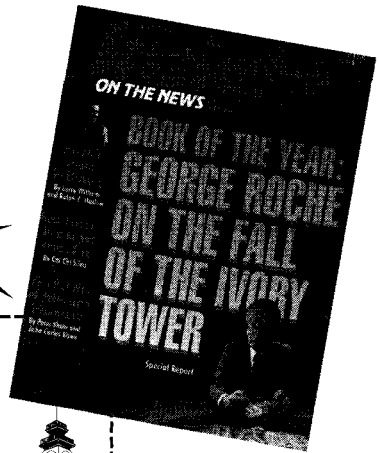

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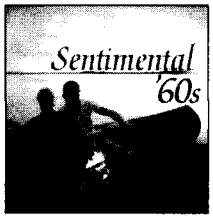

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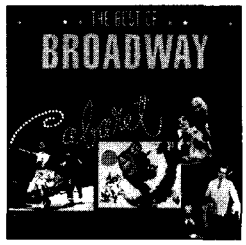

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GOODWILL AND LOVE TOWARD ALL. AS YOU MAY HAVE GUESSED,
THAT'S NOT THE HEATH FAMILY'S TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS.

ALOISE BUCKLEY HEATH

YOU KNOW that house where, the night before Christmas, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse? Well, that wasn't our house. That was a house where Mama in her kerchief and Papa in his cap could settle their brains for a long winter's nap because they knew good and well that St. Nicholas was about to come down the chimney with a bound and do absolutely everything.

It may come as a surprise to many people, but the fact is, St. Nicholas doesn't do one blessed thing for the Heath family. At our house—and I wouldn't want this mentioned in front of just anybody—Santa Claus is really Ben and me; and the period during which not a creature is stirring, not even a mouse, lasts roughly from 4:10 to 5:00 A.M. By six o'clock, actually, you couldn't call what goes on in our house "stirring."

You know the family that gathers round the hearth on Christmas Eve while Father re-reads the beloved *Christmas Carol*? Firelight flickering on absorbed little faces? Baby dropping off to sleep on Mother's shoulder? Well, that's not our family either, and I bet you guessed.

I hope I'm not giving anyone the impression that Ben and I are not respecters of tradition, because the fact is that we're simply aslosh with tradition. We always sing Christmas carols after dinner; we always hang our stockings on the mantelpiece; we always set out cookies and milk for Santa Claus; but we just don't have the time to listen to Ben read *A Christmas Carol*. We have a substitute tradition: we give Janet and Timothy a half-teaspoon of liquid phenobarbital each; Jennifer, Betsey, and Alison a teaspoon; and Buckley, Priscilla, and John two teaspoons. (We've had to keep the two eldest off the stuff these past two years; they have to stay alert.)

Then we send 16-year-old Jim, who has a voice like a bull calf, into the living room with the big children and make *him* read Dickens's beloved *Christmas Carol*; while 14-year-old Pam, who has such a sharp eye and a quick hand that she can whack a small bottom while its owner is still wondering which trespass to commit, takes the peewees into the nursery to hear Clement C. Moore's beloved "A Visit from St. Nicholas."

Ben and I refill the coffee pot and proceed forthwith to the furnace room, which is where *we* spend Christmas Eve. Not by choice, you understand—if we had a choice we'd watch *Amahl and the Night Visitors* or take a walk or something—but because the furnace room is the only one in our house which you can a) store 167 different items, ranging from aeroplane, gasoline-powered, to Zig-Zaw Puzzle Map, in; and also b) lock.

Nine out of ten of these items, you understand, have to be organized or set up or assembled, and a good many of them have to be either reconstructed or redesigned from scratch. All of them must be fully understood if Christmas morning is not to shrill with the sad cry of "What's all that stuff supposed to *be*?" or "The box says Astro-Dyno Jet, but it's just a bunch of iron sticks!" or "I'll never be able to play that. The grections have too long words." All of which leaves Ben and me with the choice of working in the living room after the last child is asleep—and when you have ten children that means never—or spending Christmas Eve in the furnace room.

The furnace room is rather peaceful, actually. By the time we've opened the boxes and laid out the hammer, saw, screwdrivers, wrenches, pliers, files, glue, rubber cement, safety pins, needles and thread, toothpicks for stiffening tabs that won't go into slots, crochet hooks and rubber bands for putting dolls' arms back on, Mercurochrome, Band-Aids, tranquilizers, Benzedrine, phenobarbital, aspirin, and a dictionary, we hardly even notice the furnace, which has a way of breathing like a dinosaur with croup. Jim's voice, bellowing, "Sit DOWN, Buckley," or "I said QUIET," filters down to us in a soft

A Christmas piece by the late Mrs. Heath is an NR *tradition. These stories are collected in* Will Mrs. Major Go to Hell?, *back in print from National Review Books.*

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murmur; and since the nursery is on the third floor and Pam's energy is limited, she clatters down only every now and then to tell us that Alison is blowing into Jay's ear and blaming it on Betsey, or that Alison keeps sticking her feet under Timothy and pinching him with her toes, or that Alison keeps muttering, "Moon on the *breast* of the new-fallen snow, moon on the *breast* of the new-fallen snow," and making all the others laugh and act silly . . . "Well, she *thinks* it's a bad word, Mother, or she wouldn't bother to say it. You know how absolutely vulgar Alison is."

"Send her down to Jim's group," I roar through the screws in my mouth, which isn't much help—or much help to Jim, anyway—but my maternal instinct always seems to wane as my mechanical instinct waxes.

If you could call it an instinct.

If you could call it mechanical.

I do know some of my limitations, though, so I always start with a simple thing, like "ROLLING TENNIS: A new game for home fun," for instance. ROLLING TENNIS only has about six pieces, which is practically boring to a woman who was on the Dean's List the entire first semester of her sophomore year at college. The instructions are nice and short, too. *The elastic steel needle*, they begin (there's no elastic steel needle in the box, but the nearest thing to it is a kind of hard, spiky thing that bends, so that must be what), *must be kept in a way that it sits up on the edge of the table.* The trouble is, it won't stay in a way that it sits up on the edge of the table unless I hold it there, and surely the ROLLING TENNIS people couldn't mean that, could they? They don't really mean for me to spend the declining years of my life holding up that spiky thing! Do they realize that I have ten children? That I'm 43 years old? Well, of course they do. There's some perfectly simple thing that I've overlooked.

"Ben, it says here . . ." I begin.

"First things first," mumbles Ben, who is engaged in his annual re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the electric train, which he always can't understand something in the transformer of. I don't tell him that if he'd leave the train up all year round he and the transformer wouldn't have to go through this every Christmas Eve. I don't tell him because it's too early. This is what I tell him around 2:00 A.M., and I'm a stickler for tradition.

Anyway, it's time to check everybody's teeth (and to tell Alison for the last time that sticking her toothbrush under the faucet doesn't fool *me* for one minute) and to hear everybody's prayers (and to tell Alison for the last time that beating everybody else to the "Amen" is *not* praying) and to kiss everybody goodnight (and to kiss Alison twice and tell her I love her anyway, which is the simple truth). On my way down I hear the baby calling, "He-e-ere, Mudda! Here, boy! *Come* on!" and since I am training her in obedience—you can never begin too young, I always think—I obey, and we have a little chat and a little rock and a little backrub until she falls asleep again.

By the time I get back to the furnace room Ben has had time to accomplish a great deal, and I feel much better about everything, even ROLLING TENNIS.

So, all right, I *will* hold the spiky thing in a way that it sits up on the edge of the table. It's not as if the children were going to play ROLLING TENNIS eight hours a day! Now: *By a slight pressure of this needle upon the axis of the runner fitted with a rubber tire the latter one begins to move, the other player swiftly catches, stops it to run, and jerks back with the same movement.*

Only there's no runner. There is a rod with a little rubber tire at each end, but if that's the runner, how would I press its axis? Anyhow, an axis is what things *turn* on, isn't it? I know it is; I won't even look it up; and it's nine o'clock and Ben has started to fiddle with that idiotic transformer again. ROLLING TENNIS will simply have to wait till he finishes. At least I know the rules. *He who has won a point plays last, but in a new game it is the last loser who plays first.*

I PULL OUT Your Friendly Corner Store. This is more my type, and besides it has a diagram that illustrates and labels not only Parts A to X of the Corner Store, but also its accessories. "Telephone," it tells you, under a picture of a telephone. "Cord." "Cash register." "Your Friendly Corner Store sign."

"Check off each step as you complete it," they warn you (and show you how—like this ☑), and "Follow all directions step by step." I never was a leader, anyhow, so I start right in. *Step 1.* ☐ *From the white side of the board press out all excess fiberboard from all slots, notches, and edges so that all the parts look like those in the kit drawings.* ☐ *Punch out holes for screws with a sharp pencil point.* ☐ *Place parts in alphabetical order.* My Friendly Corner Store and I are not so friendly as we used to be, by the time I finish Step 1. They clearly implied that there was only

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one ☐ to a step, but, I now note, there are seven ☐s in Step 10, alone.

"Ben, look at this. It says here . . ."

"There's no point in getting mad about it," says Ben, who has made up with the transformer, solved ROLLING TENNIS (they meant "axle," not "axis," if that means anything to you), and is happily assembling some Thermo-Turbo thing without so much as a glance at the directions.

"Who's mad?" I snarl. Setting up the Corner Store involves pushing 78 tabs into 78 stupid little slots, and I know from experience that at the slightest sign of irritation on my part the tabs will turn into 78 sulky little bits of tissue paper. I grit my teeth and plod on. By the time I finish Step 12 (49 ☐s later) Ben has put together the bicycle, the tricycle, the tractor, both doll carriages, the dollhouse, and the Walker Wagon. He is about to begin the electric hockey game when he discovers the instructions are in French. He hands them to me.

I can read French all right, but who knows what a *filet des buts* is, for heaven's sake, or a *casier pour pile sèche*, or a *vis à métal*, except maybe a French electrician? I go upstairs for the *Larousse*. (I *know*; but I don't think a French dictionary should necessarily be an integral part of Christmas Eve, not even at our house.) When I let myself back into the furnace room Ben looks at me for the first time this evening and blanches.

"Are you going to church like that?"

"Like what?" I answer huffily. And rhetorically.

Ben holds the Dreamy Dressing Table mirror up to my face. "It's 11:30," he says, and I tear up the stairs again.

Midnight Mass clears the crossness out of me. Priscilla goes with us this year, along with John and Pam and Jim; and as I watch them come back from Communion they look so solemn and young and tired and beautiful that my heart almost bursts until I kiss them "Merry Christmas" in the cold starlight outside the church, and they refuse, with cries of revulsion, to kiss one another. Then my heart shrivels right back to normal.

Still, the furnace room *is* an anticlimax.

By 1:30, Ben and I are getting ruthless. When we find that the assembly instructions for John's cuckoo clock take up a 16-page booklet and begin: "Look what we have here!! What fun!! It's all the parts that go to make a real-as-life BLACK FOREST CUCKOO CLOCK!!" we clap the cover right back on the box and agree to pretend we thought he wanted a do-it-yourself cuckoo clock. We give up the Corner Store after we notice that besides the 19 steps on the front of the instruction sheet, there are an additional 33 on the back. Anyhow, Betsey hasn't mentioned that Corner Store in weeks.

By 2:15 the B-52 Turret Gun, the Helicopter-Bomber, the Kookie Kitchen, the weight-lifting set, and the puppet theater are assembled and upstairs; by 3:00 we've finished the musical rocking chair, the robot lady, the Sonar set, the fire engine, the weather station, the Yakkity-Yob, and we've even found out how to make the Kissy Doll kiss. By 3:45 every last item is complete and in the living room; the Christmas list has been recovered from the rubble on the furnace-room floor, and we're ready to distribute. That is, Ben arranges artistic exhibits while I sit on the floor stuffing Christmas stockings and tell him where to artistically arrange them.

"No, not there, honey: the Winchester rifle is Alison's. Put it on the desk with the Hedda-Get-Bedda doll. . . . That Chubby Checker album goes with Pam's stuff, Ben. Right over there—by the lounging pyjamas. The Mass in B Minor is John's—in the corner, sweetie! With the lie detector and the mineralogy set." Or: ". . . Ben, he's not even four years *old*! And, anyhow, couldn't we thrash this out some other time? . . . All right, all right, but just for now would you *please* put that Kissy Doll under the piano with Timothy's dump truck?"

AND FINALLY we're through. We thumbtack a sheet across the entrance to the living room and tiptoe upstairs to hang stockings on children's bedposts. Ben takes those for the children who don't believe in Santa Claus, because if they wake up they'll know it's only Daddy with the stockings; and I take those for the children who do, because if they wake up, they'll know it's only Mother.

At 4:10, in the black dark of the upstairs hall, I tiptoe around a corner into Ben, tiptoeing from the opposite direction. I gasp and clutch him.

"It's only Santa Claus."

"Oh Ben," I sigh, too tired even to move away from his cheek, which feels like a cactus patch. "What will we ever do when the children are grown up?"

"You're not expecting grandchildren? With that crew? What do you think you are—lucky?" says my sentimental Ben. ☐

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Prosecutors on the Prowl

MONEY MATTERS

The S&L crisis cost the nation a great deal of money; the clean-up has cost money and much more besides. To the RTC, a defendant's net worth is more important than his guilt.

EDWARD L. MORRIS

IN RESPONSE to the savings-and-loan calamity, Congress passed a series of draconian laws, beginning with the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act (FIRREA) of 1989, which treat the financial collapse as a national emergency urgent enough to justify suspension of civil liberties for the accused. Following their congressional mandate, the regulatory agencies—especially the Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC), the S&L bailout agency created by FIRREA—have cast a legal dragnet over anyone associated with a failed bank or thrift. Former officers and directors are the main targets, but lawyers, accountants, and others with deep pockets are also fair game.

Each year since its creation, the RTC has been the country's largest employer of law firms. In mid 1994 it had some 1,500 private law firms and investigation firms on retainer to assist in suing directors, officers, and others associated with failed thrifts. The RTC alleges that fraud occurred in 80 per cent of the 750 S&Ls it has seized, and it has taken legal action in most of these cases. Yet Congress's own blue-ribbon commission on the S&L debacle delivered a comprehensive report in 1993 that attributed only 10 to 15 per cent of the problem to fraud and misconduct. Bert Ely, a highly respected bank economist, considers 3 per cent a more accurate estimate.

Ira Parker, who until he left the RTC in 1992 was the official who decided which lawsuits to file, now says that 90 per cent of the suits he authorized were of questionable merit. At a *Regulatory Watchdog* conference last fall, he explained how he made his decisions to file suit: "Having testified before Senator [Donald] Riegle's committee as to why one action hasn't been brought, you know that if you make the decision not to bring the action . . . you're going to be called before some committee someplace up on the Hill and asked to explain why you didn't bring it . . . It's like being in a McCarthy hearing, and you don't want to have to experience it." Bureaucrats like Mr. Parker were browbeaten into filing a flurry of lawsuits so that Don Riegle, a member of the Keating Five and head of the Senate Banking Committee, could cast himself as tough on S&L operators.

Vic Simon, editor of the authoritative *Bank Bailout Litigation News*, reports that of the 74 civil cases brought by the RTC against directors and other professionals that have gone to a "final litigated outcome" (as opposed to the vast majority that settle out of court before trial), the government has won only 19, an anemic .257 batting average. Mr. Simon attributes the poor record to indiscriminate litigation. "In plain English," he says, "when the agencies filed many hundreds of cases after their investigations produced no evidence of intentional wrongdoing, their fortunes in court nosedived." In plainer English, the RTC, prodded in part by Congress, became an ambulance chaser and has been treated as such by the courts.

In 1993 the FBI received 42,000 criminal referrals for suspected white-collar crime at the nation's insured banks and thrift institutions. (To put that number in context, the total federal penitentiary system has room for 90,000 inmates.) In the 1980s, by contrast, the FBI handled only a few thousand such referrals each year from the banks and their regulatory agencies.

The thousands of unwarranted civil and criminal lawsuits have clogged federal courtrooms and are immensely expensive for both the taxpayers and the targets of the RTC's vengeance. Yet the largest long-term cost of this hunt for scapegoats may be the dangerous precedent set by the suspension of constitutional safeguards for the accused. Witch hunts, however popular at first, undermine the legitimacy of the government that condones them.

Special Powers

CONGRESS has given the RTC and other banking agencies special powers—to freeze assets, break contracts, levy enormous fines, seize property, and search through private papers without the equivalent of a search warrant—in the prosecution of anyone managing a failed thrift institution. The courts have consistently rebuffed the RTC when asked to rule on the constitutionality of its new legal powers. But those rulings simply send the agency back to Congress to request even more legislation.

Consider what Congress has done to the long-honored statute of limitations. The states and the Federal Government have statutes of limitations to protect their citizens from lawsuits and

Mr. Morris, a St. Louis investment banker and an S&L defendant, publishes Regulatory Watchdog.

ILLUSTRATION BY BONNIE GARDNER

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prosecutions brought long after the alleged transgressions. In 1993, Representative Joseph P. Kennedy II (D., Mass.) pushed a bill through Congress that extended the limit for RTC suits to five years after a thrift failure.

When the bill reached the Senate, Christopher Dodd (D., Conn.) sounded an alarm. "The statute of limitations is not just a procedural vehicle," he said. "There are substantive implications of profound significance to people who are virtually innocent and yet become a target of a lawsuit because they have deep pockets. . . . I warn my colleagues, as we are going down this road, that this is dangerous stuff."

Despite Dodd's warning, the bill passed, giving the RTC five years after an S&L failure to file its suits. Then the RTC asked Congress to lengthen the time within which alleged wrongdoing could be prosecuted. The typical limit set by state law had been five years. A bill introduced this year by Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D., Ohio) extended this limit by five years, so that the directors of an S&L that failed in 1989 could be sued in 1994 for actions they took in 1979.

The upshot of these extensions is that S&L defendants, many now octogenarians, find themselves on trial today for their business judgment in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Those judgments were based on a different economic climate and a different regulatory rule book. In particular, they could not have taken into account how Congress's own wrongheaded deregulation of the thrift industry would play out. Nor could they have anticipated the ravages in the real-estate markets brought about by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 or the collapse of oil and gas prices in the Southwest.

Bill o' Rights Lite

IN "Bill o' Rights Lite," a *New York Times* op-ed piece published in 1993, Grateful Dead lyricist John Perry Barlow offered an updated version of the Seventh Amendment: "In suits at common law, where the contesting parties have nearly unlimited resources to spend on legal fees, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved." When the RTC brings a civil suit against an S&L director, it has access to the unlimited resources of the Federal Government to pay its legal bills. In the cases the RTC takes to trial, it pays law firms well over seven figures to do its bidding, in addition to the cost of its own staff lawyers.

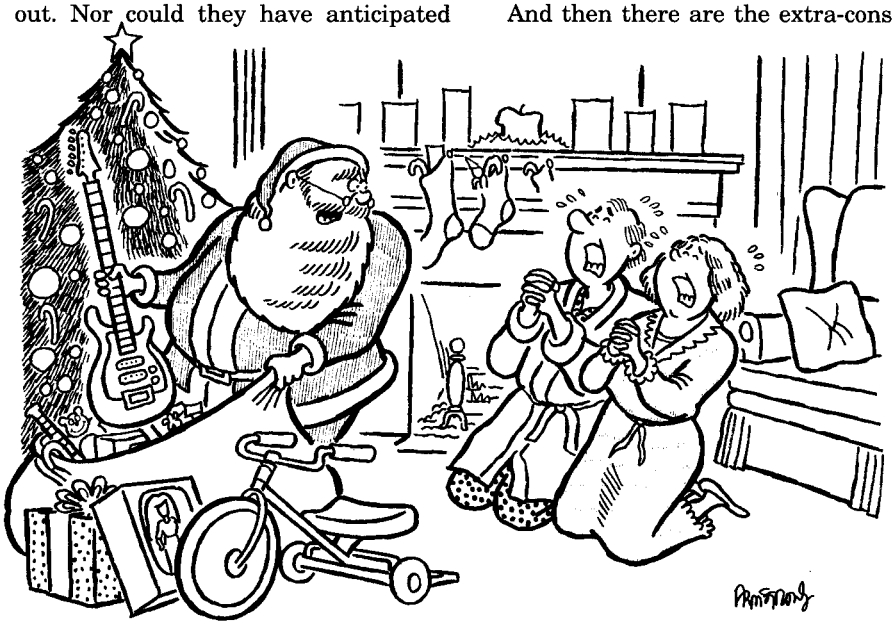
A physician in Toledo or a small-business owner in Cedar Rapids who has served on the board of a mutually owned S&L as a public service is no financial match for the RTC. The cost of the lawyers and expert witnesses necessary to defend against a complex civil suit easily exceeds $1 million. And under the rules of a government-initiated lawsuit, a successful defendant usually cannot recoup his legal fees. So it's not surprising that less than 2 per cent of the $1 billion the RTC has collected from defendants was awarded by court decisions. Uncle Sam is not just an ambulance chaser; he is also a shakedown artist.

And then there are the extra-constitutional powers with which Congress has blessed the RTC and its companion agency, the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS). FIRREA permits the RTC and the OTS to freeze a defendant's assets by merely *alleging* management wrongdoing or undue benefit from association with an S&L. Managers, whose board fees or salaries were approved by the regulators when their banks were healthy, read in their local papers that the government, without a hearing, has taken charge of their personal finances. These people, many of them pillars of the community, are subjected to the sort of prosecutorial zeal usually reserved for Mafiosi and drug dealers.

In 1992, the OTS shocked the legal community by placing a freeze order on the assets of all the partners of the Wall Street law firm Kaye Scholer, Fierman, Hays & Handler—and their immediate families—for alleged improprieties in connection with the representation of Charles Keating's Lincoln Savings. The primary OTS allegation involved Kaye Scholer's supposed duty to report potentially damaging facts about its client's activities to the regulators. The freeze order went into effect on a Monday. By mid-week, Citicorp was threatening to cut off a vital credit line, and the firm's stable of *Fortune* 500 clients had begun questioning its viability. Kaye Scholer's management committee had two choices: capitulate quickly to the OTS, or lose the firm. Before the end of the week they had handed $41 million to the government.

There was no hearing to test the merits of the OTS's claims against Kaye Scholer. Guilt or innocence was never determined, because the livelihoods of some four hundred partners and employees were at stake. A *New York Times* editorial, "Accountability by Sledgehammer," decried the freeze. But the Kaye Scholer incident was no more egregious than hundreds of other less publicized freeze orders.

Under FIRREA, the RTC, before any showing of wrongdoing, can issue what defense attorneys call "deep-pocket subpoenas," requiring potential defendants to turn over detailed histories and inventories of their assets and to give sworn statements. The clear aim is to determine whether a target's net worth is significant before going to the trouble of investigating whether his actions contributed to the demise of an S&L. Private litigants may not delve



"All right, all right, if you feel that strongly about it."

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into personal financial statements before searching for culpability, and with good reason. The financial wherewithal of defendants is irrelevant to the question of whether they did anything wrong.

If there were any doubt about the RTC's aims, David Eisenstein, a key RTC legal staffer, laid them to rest with this public warning to thrift directors, quoted in the March 22, 1991, *Miami Review*: "If you have any money, we'll be coming after you. People are left in bankruptcy when we're finished with them . . . the operative word is 'pauperization.'"

Attorneys advise hapless S&L clients in RTC litigation that the deep-pocket subpoena is only the first round in protracted litigation if the RTC determines that a lawsuit will be "cost justified." Fortunate defendants may find themselves in front of a judge such as New Hampshire's Martin Loughlin. Prior to any suit or trial, the RTC's sister agency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), was seeking access to the financial statements of defendants and their spouses. The FDIC was looking for "any suspicious accretions of wealth." The judge denied the request, saying: "To allow the FDIC to conduct a fishing expedition through the defendants' private papers in the hope that some evidence of wrongdoing will surface flies in the face of the spirit, if not the letter, of the Fourth Amendment."

Directors of banks that haven't failed can also lose their constitutional protections. The provisions of FIRREA and subsequent banking legislation eliminated many civil liberties for the managers of "open banks," a term used by regulators for institutions not yet seized by the government. Banking agencies, following the 1991 FDIC Improvement Act, which allowed for "prompt corrective action," can now exercise power against directors and officers without a nod to the due process guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment. Bank regulators can fine, fire, and banish managers from banking forever without a hearing. Defendants can appeal the decisions in federal court, but by then the damage is done. "Civil money penalties" levied by the regulators can reach $1 million a day per person without any evidence that the director knowingly or negligently committed a violation or engaged in the conduct of which he is accused. A

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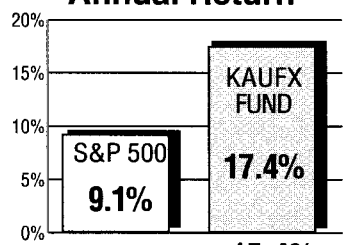

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million dollars per day must have been beyond the imagination of the authors of the Eighth Amendment when they prohibited "excessive fines."

From a monetary standpoint, the most important and far-reaching constitutional challenge resulting from the S&L crisis will involve Fifth Amendment property protections violated by the many unwarranted takeovers of financial institutions since 1989. Several billion dollars of claimed damages for illegal "takings" are now before the U.S. Court of Claims and may well end up before the Supreme Court. The government has already quietly settled with the former owners of Miami's Southeast Banking Corp. and Houston's FirstCity Bancorp for premature takeovers of those once-important institutions.

When Gary Hindes, a former shareholder of the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society, filed suit in April to have his money returned after the ill-conceived takeover of America's oldest and once-largest savings bank, he said FDIC agents give "state-sponsored terrorism an entirely new meaning." But his lawsuit, and hundreds of others like it, may go nowhere unless Congress undoes the last five years of banking legislation.

Among the more worthwhile projects the 104th Congress could undertake is calling off the six-year hunt for savings-and-loan scapegoats. Voting against the 1993 legislation to extend the time limit for S&L prosecutions, Senator Alfonse D'Amato (R., N.Y.), chairman-in-waiting of the Banking Committee, said: "For every [S&L] thief and crook, there are ten decent people who find themselves involved in litigation simply because they have some assets. Now that is wrong. How are we going to handle this?"

It must be handled by revamping the vengeful legislation that has already destroyed the careers and financial security of thousands of innocent people who were at the wrong place at the wrong time. Congress must repeal those features of FIRREA and subsequent banking legislation that have set the dangerous precedent of sacrificing civil liberties and property rights for the sake of short-term retribution. □

Ending Welfare as We Know It

POOR SUBSTITUTE

We need to end LBJ's failed war—and let the real war on poverty begin.

PETE DU PONT & JEFFREY EISENACH

WHILE LBJ was trying to win the Vietnam War with a disastrous policy of incremental escalation, he started fighting another war with an equally flawed strategy: the War on Poverty. Since 1964 the Federal Government has spent $3.5 trillion on eradicating poverty, the primary result of which has been to create a permanent underclass that did not exist before. And according to the U.S. Census Bureau, poverty is still increasing: 15 per cent of American families of four have incomes below the poverty level.

We should have learned one thing from this experiment: the Federal Government cannot fight poverty effectively, and it has no business trying. Indeed, by attempting to federalize the war on poverty, it has stolen not only the resources needed to fight the war but the responsibility for fighting it. Federal taxes take our money and federal bureaucracies waste it.

We seem to have forgotten that the war on poverty has never been, and even today is not, primarily a federal war. It is an *American* war, and Americans win victories in that war every day. Alcoholics Anonymous and Salvation Army kitchens, for example, bring real help to needy people. Only on the fronts dominated by the Federal Government are we losing. And the more resources we pour into the federal fronts, the more we lose.

Mr. du Pont, a former governor of Delaware, is policy chairman of the National Center for Policy Analysis. Mr. Eisenach is president of the Progress and Freedom Foundation.

Ceasefire

THE first key to winning the American war on poverty is to stop the *federal* war. Not switch strategies, not withdraw a few thousand troops, not fight harder or tougher or smarter. It is time to disband the only losing army we have in the field. We must turn the responsibility for educating, feeding, healing, and housing people over to individuals, communities, and the states. We then must end federally funded education and training programs; end federal funding for AFDC, Food Stamps, housing, and the Women, Infants, and Children program; and end federally funded Medicaid and other health programs aimed at the poor. In short, end the Federal Government's involvement in everything we once called "Health, Education, and Welfare"—a total of $240 billion in spending, based on President Clinton's budget for Fiscal Year 1995.

How can we even think about such a change? First, let's remember that the Federal Government is far from the sole supporter of welfare programs. Only a few programs (housing, Food Stamps) are overwhelmingly paid for by the Federal Government. The rest are either funded by a combination of governments (e.g., AFDC, Medicaid) or funded almost exclusively by states and localities (e.g., education programs). Indeed, of the $569 billion spent by governments on health, education, and welfare programs in 1991 (the last year for which data are available), less than 40 per cent came from the Federal Government. The rest—63 per cent of the total—was raised directly by state and local governments.

Second, government public-assistance programs aren't the only efforts Americans make to help one another. In fact, in 1991 private charities provided, in cash or in kind, over $176 billion for health, education, and welfare. More than $100 billion of that amount was in cash, provided by the 72 per

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cent of American households that contributed to charity; the remainder was in the form of volunteered time. In 1991 alone, Americans volunteered over 15 billion hours of their time to charitable activities, the equivalent of nine million full-time employees. They funnel their efforts through organizations like Goodwill, the Shriners' Burn Clinics, and the Catholic schools, national organizations like Habitat for Humanity and the American Red Cross, and the small groups that exist in almost every community simply to provide for others in need.

Third, the Federal Government spends money very inefficiently. Research finds that less than half of the average federal welfare dollar actually goes to a needy individual, with the remainder squandered on layer after layer of bureaucracy. A Northwestern University study of 1984 Cook County welfare payments found that less than 35 cents out of every welfare dollar was paid in cash directly to the needy.

In total, the federal contribution to health, education, and welfare assistance comes to less than 28 per cent of national anti-poverty spending, and it is probably worth a lot less than that by the time it reaches the people it's supposed to help. Contrary to what you'd think listening to the debates in Congress, if federal assistance stopped tomorrow, schools would not close, children would not starve, hospitals would not shut their doors. Disbanding the federal army does not mean ending the war on poverty.

A New Safety Net

WE propose to redefine the Federal Government's role from *providing* a social safety net to *ensuring* that a social safety net is provided through whatever means Americans find most effective. Suppose, specifically, that we created a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for individual contributions to health, education, and welfare programs operated either by state or local governments or by private-sector charities. That is, for every dollar individuals give to such programs—up to, say, $3,000 (about what the median household pays in federal income taxes)—they could take a dollar off their tax bills.

Such a policy would dramatically increase the resources available to nonfederal public-assistance programs. In 1990, the last year for which complete data are available from the Internal Revenue Service, 89 million households paid at least some income tax. Allowing for the fact that many households paid less than $3,000 and assuming that everyone, given the opportunity, would rather send his money to the Salvation Army than to Uncle Sam, we estimate that roughly $240 billion would be taken from the Federal Government and added to the coffers of state and local governments and private-sector charities. That balances almost exactly the health, education, and welfare spending we propose to cut from the federal budget.

This arrangement would extend to all Americans the favorable tax treatment of charitable contributions now available only to those who itemize. Of the 113 million tax returns filed in 1990, only about 30 million itemized deductions—and virtually all of the itemizers claimed charitable deductions. Since nearly three out of four households gave to charity that year, this means that tens of millions of Americans are receiving no specific tax benefit in return for their contributions to charity. And these are precisely the people, those who make the least, who surveys show give the highest percentage of their incomes to charity.

The proposal would also ensure that virtually everyone who now pays income taxes would get directly involved in thinking about how best to provide health, education, and welfare services in the United States. The concept of letting the government do it—which Marvin Olasky criticizes so effectively in his recent book, *The Tragedy of American Compassion*—would be tossed aside once and for all.

Finally, this system would transfer a central function of society from an institution Americans do not trust to a set of institutions which, by and large, they do. For decades, Americans have been perplexing pollsters and political analysts with their answers to two sets of questions. On the one hand, they persistently tell pollsters the Federal Government "is too big and spends too much." On the other hand, when asked about spending on social services like health care, public assistance, and education, they say more needs to be done. The apparent paradox is easy to explain. People want value for the money they spend to help the poor. And they want to see the impact of their work. To borrow a phrase from the environmentalists, they want to "think globally and act locally." It's time to end the federal war on poverty and let the real war—the American war—begin. □

The Cult of Preservation

A HIGHER AUTHORITY

Landmark commissions threaten religious freedom by trying to keep houses of worship as they are.

JAMES BOVARD

A FIERCE DISPUTE raged in Washington, D.C., last spring over the city's proposal to designate seven hundred buildings in Logan Circle as historic landmarks. Logan Circle is a mixed neighborhood, with yuppies moving in and upgrading homes in a generally dilapidated, high-crime area that includes numerous soup kitchens and homeless shelters as well as several distinguished old churches. The designation means that owners have to get permission from the local Historic Preservation Review Board for any changes to their buildings. Many of the social-service providers fiercely oppose the proposal, since

Mr. Bovard, an adjunct analyst with the Competitive Enterprise Institute, is the author of Lost Rights: The Destruction of American Liberty *(St. Martin's, 1994).*

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it will probably make it more difficult for them to serve their clientele. Said the Reverend Beecher Hicks, pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church: "Our opponents have filed this application to prevent such unhistoric activity as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and caring for children proliferating in our neighborhood."

Spokesmen for the Metropolitan Baptist Church and the Luther Place Memorial Church complained that the borders of the historic district had been drawn to include their property while excluding a fancy condominium complex. "The debate over the historic designation," the *Washington Post* noted, "has become a fight between a group of mostly white, affluent residents who own houses around Logan Circle and a disparate cast of social-service providers and black parishioners."

As the Logan Circle controversy illustrates, local governments are increasingly sabotaging freedom of religion with historic preservation ordinances that prohibit congregations from modifying their houses of worship. By forbidding changes in religious architecture, these ordinances in effect dictate that people may pray only in government-approved spaces. Forcing congregants to maintain their church's existing structure is as bad as forcing them to continue using old prayer books.

Some courts have not seen it that way. In the 1980s St. Bartholomew's Church on New York's Park Avenue repeatedly sought permission to sell its community house to developers who wanted to build a high-rise office building. The congregation planned to use the revenue from the sale to finance repairs to the church and to fund charitable activities. But the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission denied the church's request because the church and its community house had been designated as historic landmarks. The church sued, arguing that the restriction violated the First Amendment's guarantee of religious freedom and the Fifth Amendment's requirement that private property not be taken for public use without "just compensation." In 1991 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit rejected both arguments. "The church has failed to prove that it cannot continue its religious practice in its existing facilities," the court ruled. Furthermore, "so long as the church can continue to use its property in the way that it has been using it—to house its charitable and religious activity—there is no unconstitutional taking."

The court's decision thus redefined property rights to exclude every possible use of property except the current use. Laurie Beckelman, chairman of the New York City Landmarks Commission, hailed the ruling as affirming the commission's "absolute power . . . to designate and regulate religious properties as landmarks."

Sympathetic Courts

OTHER courts have been more sympathetic. In 1992 the Washington Supreme Court ruled that Seattle's attempt to impose a landmark designation on the First Covenant Church violated the free-exercise clause. Yet the city is still pursuing designation of other churches. The First United Methodist Church has been engaged in a running battle with Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board. The church's membership has fallen by almost 75 per cent, and the current church members can no longer afford to preserve the church in the style preferred by city officials. The *Seattle Times* noted that "church members want a more welcoming worship space. Remodeling could range from moving the pulpit closer to worshippers and expanding the vestibule, to allow people to mingle before and after services, to replacing all or some of the building with a new, smaller sanctuary." But the city thinks the church is fine the way it is.

Some preservation commissions act as if they are entitled to interpret Holy Writ. In 1987 the Boston Landmarks Commission prohibited the Immaculate Conception Church from altering lighting, windows, paint, doors, finishes, and a painting of the Assumption of Mary inside the church. The Society of Jesus, which owned the church, had proposed renovating the interior to reflect architecturally the changes made to the Roman Catholic liturgy by the Second Vatican Council. The city overruled the Jesuits, arguing that the church interior "has major aesthetic importance independent of its religious symbolism."

The Jesuits sued the Boston Landmarks Commission, whose decision was eventually overturned by the Massachusetts Supreme Court. As Seton Hall law professor Angela Carmella wrote in the *Villanova Law Review*, "by determining which religious beliefs are worthy of architectural expression, the state compels affirmation of particular religious beliefs. . . . Design control involves fundamental threats to religious liberty . . . because [it stems] from the state's conviction that it can codesign religious architecture, consequently reserving for itself a role as coauthor of doctrine and worship and of religious expression."

Sometimes the decisions of landmark commissions cannot be understood even on aesthetic grounds. In 1991 a Washington, D.C., court imposed a preliminary injunction to prevent modification of a Christian Science church and office building while the city considered designating the structures as historic landmarks. The Washington Christian Science Church, built in 1971, represents the worst of modern architecture. As one cynic noted, "This is a building of which Saddam Hussein would be proud. It could take a direct hit with a missile and nothing would happen—it is a solid block of concrete." The church has already spent tens of thousands of dollars challenging the city's interference.

A few local governments have shown sensitivity to the rights of worshippers. In 1987 Chicago enacted a landmarks ordinance that let owners of religious properties exempt their buildings from historic designation. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a federally funded organization, was outraged and sued the city in 1990, claiming the exemption was unconstitutional because it "has the purpose and effect of endorsing religion, in violation of the First Amendment's establishment clause." In other words, if the government is persecuting property owners in general, the Constitution requires that it also persecute churches.

If the historic-preservation movement had been as strong in the tenth century as it is now, the magnificent Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages might never have been built. The preservationists would have been outraged at the demolition of eighth-century stone-block churches to make room for the new buildings and would probably have run to the nearest king for an injunction. Politicians must not be allowed to make the cult of preservation into America's official religion. □

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Watching the Syrian–Israeli Border

FEAR OF HEIGHTS

The U.S. should put peacekeepers on the Golan Heights only if the peace is real and their mission is modest.

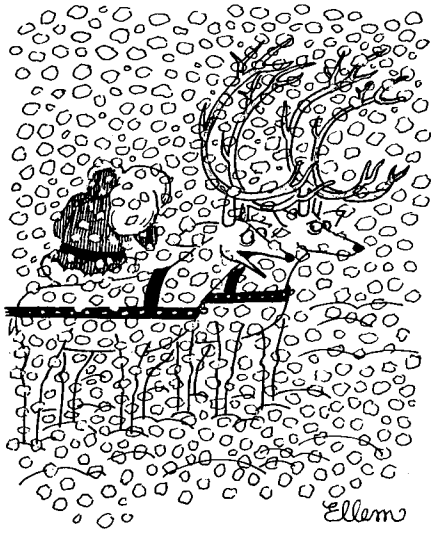
A. J. BACEVICH

ALTHOUGH no sure thing, a Syrian–Israeli peace treaty has moved into the realm of the possible. Consistent with the formula "land for peace," the terms of any such agreement are likely to center on control of the strategically critical Golan Heights. Through a process of phased withdrawal, Israel will evacuate the Golan and recognize it as part of Syria. In return, Syria will give up its decades-long campaign to destroy the Jewish state and will accept something approaching normal relations with Israel.

If the negotiations now under way succeed, few doubt that the United States will play a prominent role in guaranteeing the result, much as it has for each preceding step of the "peace process," from Camp David onward. Indeed, we already have some inkling of the form that such guarantees might take: as one element of U.S. support for a Syrian–Israeli treaty, both the Bush and Clinton Administrations have made forthright offers —apparently repeated during Prime Minister Rabin's recent visit to Washington—to station American troops on the Golan as peacekeepers.

As with any proposed deployment of American military power, this offer demands serious scrutiny. What will be the precise mission of such a force? How large will it be? What risks will such a commitment entail? Under whose command will American forces serve? How long will they remain? The attention thus far given to these questions has been disappointing.

Beyond such considerations lies a more fundamental question: How, if at all, will such an initiative benefit the United States? Although furthering the cause of peace in the Middle East is a worthy goal, many Americans will question whether peace alone warrants accepting burdensome new obligations.



"I don't know about you, but every winter is the winter of my discontent."

They will insist that the U.S. should participate in peacekeeping only if doing so advances specific American interests in the region. Arrangements that cannot be justified on that basis invite ongoing misunderstanding and controversy. If conflicts arise, they are likely to prove unsustainable.

Discussions of whether the United States should dispatch peacekeepers to the Golan should proceed with several considerations in mind.

First, the status quo on the Golan is by no means unacceptable. The cease-fire that ended the fighting there in 1973 has proved to be remarkably durable; the chief by-product of the ensuing Israeli–Syrian military stand-off has been stability. Although formidable, the Syrian military today is no match for the Israeli Defense Forces. Indeed, by virtually any measure, Syria is a declining threat, crippled by its loss of superpower sponsorship and enjoying few attractive options. Thus, from a U.S. perspective, there is no compelling need to offer large incentives to entice either Syria or Israel into signing a treaty.

Second, American purposes in the region are best served by strategic partnership with an Israel that is strong and self-confident. Any U.S. military presence, however well intentioned, that erodes those qualities—for example, by undermining Israel's traditional insistence that it alone bears responsibility for defending its borders—is likely to prove contrary to our long-term interests.

Third, thanks to the profligacy of U.S. policies since the Persian Gulf War, our global posture suffers from a growing imbalance between means and ends. As Americans awaken to this fact, that awareness may exacerbate a latent urge (shared by influential figures in the now-dominant Republican Party) to disengage from areas where the return on U.S. investment appears marginal. Absent the old logic of the Cold War, certain American commitments in the Middle East—one thinks of the billions poured annually into Egypt—may appear disproportionate to the benefits derived. New obligations hastily undertaken not only worsen the current imbalance between ends and means but may provoke a backlash that will complicate efforts to sustain even genuinely vital commitments in the region.

Four Criteria

WITH this as background, there are four criteria that any proposed Golan peacekeeping mission must meet:

1. Stationing American peacekeepers on the Golan must not only strengthen the chances for a lasting peace but also

(Continues on page 68)

Mr. Bacevich is executive director of the Foreign Policy Institute at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C. He is co-author, with Michael Eisenstadt and Carl Ford, of Supporting Peace: America's Role in an Israel–Syria Peace Agreement *(Washington Institute for Near East Policy).*

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THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

December 9, 1994

Dear Rusty,

Before I do anything, I need to give you my new office address: The Hon. Al Gore, The Oval Office, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20500.

Mr. Panetta and I have one of those "partners'" desks—you know the type: wide enough for two people to sit across from each other, yet still close enough to read each other's mail.

Actually, this new arrangement is working out pretty well. I said to Tipper this morning: "Tipper, you know how you were always on my back about my someday working in the Oval Office?"

She looked up from her morning "Red Zinger" tea. "Well, that's where I am now," I said proudly.

"Enjoy it, Al," she said. "Maybe you'll get invited back during the Kerrey–McCurdy Administration."

Tipper's in a dark mood these days. But I don't let it get me down.

Today, for instance, could have been a bad day. It was our first meeting with Newt Gingrich, the new Speaker of the House. And to tell you the truth, Rusty, Mr. Panetta and I actually dreaded the meeting. And yet he was just as charming and as nice as he could be. There was some initial awkwardness, of course—Bill put cream in his coffee when Newt specifically asked for half-and-half—but Bill politely excused himself and went back to his study, and Mr. Panetta and I quickly got down to business.

Actually, it was Mr. Panetta who got down to business. I was busy organizing the new recycling bins in the Oval Office. (I'm putting paper and plastic by my side of the desk; glass and metal go over on Mr. Panetta's side.)

"Okay, Newt," Mr. Panetta began, "you and I have known each other for a long time—"

"With term limits, we would have known each other a lot shorter—"

"Come on, Newt," Mr. Panetta interrupted. "Give it a rest. Just tell me what you want."

Newt took a big breath.

"Okay," he said, "here's what I want. I want to cut congressional staff by a third, more in the next Congress. I want to sell off one office building. I want to eliminate most subcommittees, and at least one full committee. I want to de-certify the House Bank, close the House Post Office, remove the amendments privilege from the Congressional Record. I want to dismantle the Departments of Education, Energy, and Veterans' Affairs. I want to reduce the capital-gains tax to zero, slice welfare payments in half, close out farm subsidies, phase out the Social Security Administration, and institute a flat tax."

"No, seriously, Newt. What do you want?" Mr. Panetta asked again.

"I want to flap my arms and fly to the moon. I want to sing the lead in Turandot. I want to be able to turn myself invisible."

"Okay," said Mr. Panetta, making notes on a legal pad, "now we're getting somewhere."

I left them to haggle. As I was dumping stacks of "Health Security Act of 1994" into the recycling bin, I overheard HRC and George Stephanopoulos working the phones. I poked my head in.

George looked up brightly.

"Do me a favor, Al," he said. "Call this number and ask for Barbra." He handed me a slip of paper with a phone number in the 310 area code.

"You want me to call Barbra Streisand?" I asked.

"Just to see if she'll take your call. Every time I call, all I get is 'Miss Streisand is in a meeting.' How many meetings could she have in one day?"

I got out of there pretty fast. George has been seriously depressed since November—he hasn't moussed his hair in six weeks; he just lets it flop down any old way, without any of the body or hold it used to have—and yesterday I read in the "Style" section that he was spotted at Red Sage wearing a suit with one vent in the jacket. HRC has been okay, but Tipper assures me that the one thing she learned from all her work on the health-care bill is that anti-depressants work best in the first few weeks, before the "Prozac crash" kicks in.

I made my apologies and headed back to the Oval Office. Word had just reached Mr. Panetta that Uncle Lloyd Bentsen was planning to resign. Gingrich suggested himself as Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Panetta said he planned to nominate Bob Rubin.

"I'll support Rubin," Gingrich said, smiling his scary smile, "on one condition."

"What's that?" Mr. Panetta asked.

"You know Josh Steiner, Bentsen's chief of staff?"

"Uh-huh," nodded Mr. Panetta.

"We put him in an orphanage," Newt said.

"Deal," said Mr. Panetta. They shook hands.

Rusty, we need you here!

Your pal, Al

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Styles of Criminality

GEORGE F. WILL

BY 1927, at age 28, Al Capone was among the most famous Americans, master of a complex service industry in a major metropolitan area where he was a power broker with considerable clout. As exercised by Capone, clout could be memorable. But by 1938 Capone was "the Wop with the Mop," swabbing the concrete corridors of Alcatraz, a syphilitic shell of his former self. In 1947, thoroughly demented, he died.

In 1970, at age 28, Huey Newton was the toast of "progressives" on both coasts, celebrated as the distillation of radicals' yearnings—an intellectual outlaw in politics. But sometime before dawn on August 22, 1989, Newton, by then just another past-his-prime thug, disregarded reports that some drug dealers with a business grievance were gunning for him. He went looking for some crack. At 6:10 A.M. his body was found on an Oakland sidewalk.

The lives of Capone and Newton are studies in the dynamics, and costs, of celebrity. Both careers had remarkably compressed trajectories, with steep plunges from apogees that in retrospect seem as much ridiculous as scandalous. Now the simultaneous publication of biographies of Capone and Newton is an occasion for this nation to learn, at long last, a cautionary lesson about the power of the modern engines of publicity to give grotesque twists to the public's perceptions.

The Shadow of the Panther: Huey Newton and the Price of Black Power in America, by Hugh Pearson (Addison-Wesley, 422 pp., $24)

Capone: The Man and the Era, by Laurence Bergreen (Simon & Schuster, 701 pp., $30)

Capone, as portrayed by Laurence Bergreen, was a cunning creature more or less sincerely convinced that his enterprises, principally bootlegging but also gambling and prostitution, produced jobs for deserving men and women and satisfied appetites that he did not create and which someone else would satisfy if he did not. The shootings and beatings and other unpleasantnesses were, he thought, just robust solutions to business disputes that, given the irrationality of the time, could not be submitted to more decorous arbitrations, as in courts. Capone seems to have convinced himself that his activities were legitimized by the illegitimacy of the Volstead Act and other laws that gave rise to the markets he served. Mr. Bergreen, who cannot be accused of being too censorious about his subject, suggests that but for Prohibition and other laws interfering with the satisfaction of consensual vices, Capone's entrepreneurial energies would have flowed productively in other directions.

Bonnie Gardner

Newton, on whom Hugh Pearson casts a cold eye, was a dismal and difficult-to-decipher tangle of delusion and cynicism. The Black Panthers organization was largely Newton's creation and instrument, and finally one of his many casualties. It began in 1966 as an organization for black self-defense against perceived—and real—police brutality. For years the Black Panthers preserved a patina of social responsibility by running breakfast programs for children. However, at some point, and not long into the life of the organization, Newton almost certainly stopped believing, or trying to believe, or even pretending to believe that he was a "civil-rights activist." Yet for years portions of the American Left persisted in regarding him as an idealist whose roughness—murders, rapes, and savage beatings—testified to his "authenticity" as a man of "the streets."

No matter how hard any sympathizers try to locate "root causes" of the careers of Capone and Newton, neither career was necessary. But both careers were symptomatic of national fevers of their eras.

Around the turn of the century, about the time the Capone family booked passage from Naples to New York, it was widely assumed that Italian immigrants, especially those from Naples and farther south, were permanent residents on what today is called the far left slope of the bell curve. Mr. Bergreen labors to wring extenuation from the "climate of anti-Italian prejudice" during Capone's formative years.

Mr. Pearson, a young African-American journalist, knows the economic distress and racial tensions of the Oakland where Newton grew up and the Black Panthers were born. After World War II Oakland sent police recruiters across the South seeking officers experienced in keeping blacks subservient. But Pearson's book, which is an act of considerable moral courage, is unblinking in its refusal to give criminality and other pathologies the dignity of politics.

Capone was born in Brooklyn in 1899 and was raised near the stench and disease of the Gowanus Canal. He attended schools where fistfights between male students and female teachers were not uncommon. One such fight between the 14-year-old Al and his teacher ended his schooling. He became a minor racketeer, and moved to Chicago in 1921. By then his adolescent encounters with prostitutes had given him syphilis. After years of latency (it was not discovered until a

Mr. Will, a former NR *literary editor, is a syndicated columnist and the author most recently of* The Leveling Wind *(Viking).*

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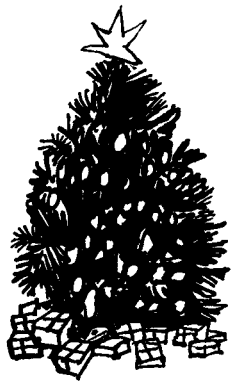
prison examination in the 1930s) it attacked his brain, distorting his personality, which was not nice to begin with. Eventually it produced dementia. No one can say how much Capone's mood swings, from ebullience to the sort of rage that resulted in his bludgeoning to death with baseball bats three business associates at a dinner party, resulted from neurosyphilis. Or how much his personality was shaped by the cocaine that produced his perforated septum, which also was discovered in a prison examination. Bergreen speculates that because tertiary syphilis is associated with megalomania, it was indispensable to Capone's criminal-commercial success: "The Capone we remember was the creation of a disease that had magnified his personality. Syphilis made Al Capone larger than life."



Not really. He became a celebrity by making the most of an irrational social policy, Prohibition, and of the spectacular corruption of the city that H. G. Wells called a "dark smear under the sky." Oh, Chicago, where a popular booklet, *If Christ Came to Chicago!*, was, Bergreen says, a "guide disguised as a diatribe": it included a map locating the better brothels.

In the 1920s, when a President said that the business of America is business, Americans celebrated commercial and industrial bigness—concentration, centralization, organization. Capone, a lifelong Republican, used modern technologies—cars, trucks, machine guns—to help him achieve economies of scale in slaking the thirst of Chicago. There, criminal factions held well-reported conferences in fine hotels. A journalist wrote of the gangsters "thrust up by Volstead" to "the eminence of big business men. Here they sat, partitioning Chicago and Cook County into trade areas, covenanting against society and the law, and going about it with the assurance of a group of directors of United States Steel."

This was during the decade in which radio, tabloid newspapers, and the new business of "public relations" produced what has been called "the age of ballyhoo." Suddenly the public had a powerful thirst for "personalities" and "stars" and "heroes" of all sorts.

Bergreen reports that when Capone dined out at Miami restaurants, he "arrived with a retinue of thugs, one of whom lugged a large bass fiddle case, which contained the gold-rimmed plates Al favored and a cache of machine guns, should a show of force become necessary during the meal." In 1930, at Northwestern's Medill School of Journalism, a student poll picked the following list of the world's ten most "outstanding personages": Mussolini, Charles Lindbergh, Admiral Byrd, George Bernard Shaw, Bobby Jones, President Hoover, Gandhi, Einstein, Henry Ford, and Capone.

One year later Capone was brought down. In 1927 the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled against a South Carolina bootlegger who claimed that the Fifth Amendment protection against self-incrimination meant he did not have to pay taxes on earnings from illegal activities. Nice try, said the Court. Capone was eventually convicted of income-tax evasion.

On October 3, 1931, three days before his trial began, Capone, who often had preened and been applauded at boxing matches and other sporting events, was booed at a Northwestern football game. The social climate had changed. In the grimness of the Depression the nation found Capone's flamboyance repellent. And the nation's taste in outlaws was changing. Capone, the urban organization man, was becoming an anachronism. The rising stars were small-town loners striking against institutions blamed for the nation's distress—banks. The new decade belonged to such bankrobbers as John Dillinger, "Ma" Barker, "Pretty Boy" Floyd, and Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow. It was just ten years since Capone had arrived in Chicago with no money and few prospects. He had become internationally infamous as a symbol of that city, and now was bound for oblivion in the bowels of the federal penitentiary system.

Huey Newton, too, was a brief but emblematic figure. He was produced by the politics of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and by the national media, which were not bashful about manufacturing "leaders" for black Americans. Newton was an inherently perishable product because American leftists are fickle about their political fashions. And Newton was destroyed by three toxic gifts—unearned income, unmerited adulation, and cocaine. He got all three from white liberals.

Pearson's narrative is as mesmerizing as carnage at the side of a highway—Newton, high on cocaine, watching *The Godfather* over and over; Newton sodomizing Bobby Seale with a bullwhip; Newton receiving a PhD in "The History of Consciousness" from the University of California at Santa Cruz. This story, in which Mario Savio, Tom Hayden, *Ramparts* magazine, and similar relics make cameo appearances, seems to come from a past more distant and less believable than Capone's 1920s.

Remember the famous photograph of Newton sitting in a wicker chair suggestive of an African throne, with warriors' shields on either side, and an animal pelt on the floor? Newton was holding a spear in one hand and a rifle in the other. He was a premature multiculturalist. He also was the Panthers' Minister of Defense, then Supreme Commander, then Supreme Servant of the People, in the sandbox politics of the American Left. Still, the Black Panther "party" was a good way to get girls, whose reluctance to sleep with dignitaries was stigmatized as petit bourgeois deviationism.

Newton's move into a posh penthouse was a bad career move if he wanted to continue to be regarded as a tribune of the downtrodden. But he didn't, so what the hell. Pearson describes the disgust he felt in telling the story of Newton and the Panthers. Pearson is angry "at our society and myself, for paying so much attention to an organization that, arguably, in so many ways amounted to little more than a temporary media phenomenon." But by making that clear, Mr. Pearson has performed a signal service. Perhaps the nation will be a little less susceptible to the recurring temptation to inflate criminals into something grander than they are.

In 1965 Al Capone's son, then 45, was arrested for shoplifting $3.50 worth of aspirin and batteries from a Miami convenience store. Said he, "Everybody has a little larceny in them." Perhaps, but some people have a lot more than others. When explaining criminals, that is a good place to start, and sometimes to stop. □

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Whodunit?

PETER W. RODMAN

IN THE first volume of *The Gulag Archipelago*, published in the early 1970s, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn stressed one central point: that the system of state terror constructed in the Soviet Union was the work of Vladimir Lenin himself, not an aberrational misdeed of Josef Stalin perverting the essential goodness of the Leninist design. Solzhenitsyn's achievement was to document, with heroic thoroughness (since all his research was clandestine), the establishment of the concentration camps and slave-labor system, the secret police, the show trials, and the purges, and to demonstrate that they began with the very inception of the Soviet state.

That is why Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag* volumes were so profoundly subversive. Ever since Nikita Khrushchev denounced the crimes of Stalin in 1956, blaming Stalin was the Party line, and a way of preserving the myth of the purity of the original conception. Many in the West (especially devotees of Leon Trotsky or Nikolai Bukharin) were, and some still are, beguiled by the myth of a benign and hopeful Communism, an idealistic experiment distorted by Lenin's barbarian successor.

Lenin: A New Biography, by Dmitri Volkogonov, translated and edited by Harold Shukman (Free Press, 529 pp., $30)

In the Soviet Union itself, the very legitimacy of the system depended on this myth.

Thus it was that under Mikhail Gorbachev a fierce battle raged within the Politburo over whether to permit public criticisms of Lenin's cruelties and, in particular, whether to permit publication of the *Gulag* volumes. In the end, both were permitted, and who can say that their shattering impact did not accelerate the demise of the Soviet system?

Now comes a stunning book of revelations from the liberated Bolshevik archives, documenting the most intimate official secrets of the Communist Party under Lenin's rule. When the USSR was dissolved at the end of 1991 and the Party banned, reformers uncovered a cache of 3,700 super-secret documents in a steel-doored vault deep in the basement—Lenin's archive. One of the first allowed into the archive was Colonel-General Dmitri Volkogonov, respected military historian and author of a devastating biography of Stalin (also based on revelatory documentation). Mr. Volkogonov became chairman of the parliamentary commission that took custody of Party files, and also served as an advisor to President Boris Yeltsin. His discoveries in the Lenin archive became the basis for this book.

Among its most important contributions is the full story of Lenin's secret sources of funding in Western Europe, particularly Imperial Germany, before the Revolution—and of the German High Command's assistance in arranging Lenin's return to Russia in 1917. All this was long suspected; now it is proved, down to the bookkeeping details. And it is a grimly fascinating story as well. The old Bolshevik Yakov Ganetsky, one of the financial wizards who arranged the secret German funding that saved the Bolsheviks, was later executed during Stalin's purges—to silence him forever.

Lenin's personal role in the creation of the totalitarian state is also definitively outlined. It was Lenin who personally ordered the execution of Tsar Nicholas II—and his entire family—so as to "remove the possibility of the monarchist banner reappearing on the scene." It was Lenin who laid down the principle of unremitting class war and called for systematic terror against the bourgeoisie, the Church, the more prosperous farmers, and others who resisted Soviet power. Stalin later carried out the policies with a death toll a few orders of magnitude higher, but the policies were launched by Lenin. Lenin's internal instructions to his Politburo colleagues repeatedly used a phraseology that later became familiar under the Nazis and, more recently, the Serbs: the language of "cleansing" the land of "harmful insects," "parasites," "bandits"—i.e., opponents. Other examples of Lenin's hands-on management style:

—In 1921, he sent this order to a local Party leader: "The forest where the bandits are hiding must be cleared with poison gas; careful calculation must be made to ensure that the cloud of asphyxiating gas spreads throughout the forest and exterminates everything hidden there."

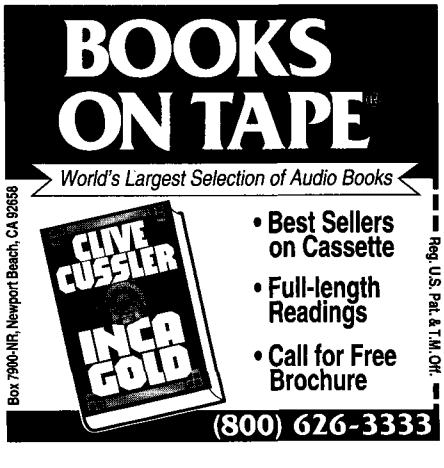
—In 1922, after hearing that Patriarch Tikhon was resisting the confiscation of Church valuables, Lenin wrote the Politburo calling for punishment "of such ferocity that it [the Church] will not forget it for decades to come . . . the greater the number of reactionary clergy and bourgeoisie shot the better."

—As early as 1918, the Bolsheviks were organizing concentration camps and, as Volkogonov notes wryly, "those who were spared the bullet began filling them." A penal colony was built at Ukhta in 1921, then another in Kholmogory, then an endless archipelago of prison camps that covered the country. What Solzhenitsyn laboriously wove together from hundreds of smuggled eyewitness accounts of the camps, Volkogonov confirms and documents from the inner decision-making of the Politburo.

The volume is filled with the vituperative Lenin, the egotistical Lenin, the fanatical Lenin. No wonder this archive was kept hidden away. For good measure, Volkogonov throws in a few titillating personal details, such as the story of Lenin's long love affair with his fellow revolutionary Inessa Armand, and some grotesque photos of Lenin following his strokes in 1922.

There will be no account more authoritative. □

Mr. Rodman, an NR *senior editor, is the author of* More Precious than Peace: The Cold War and the Struggle for the Third World *(Scribners).*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Up the Amazon

STEVE SAILER

THIRTY years ago, Tom Wolfe noted that journalists and intellectuals were missing the biggest story of the Sixties: that ordinary Americans finally had enough money to ignore traditional restraints and live out their individual primordial urges. The commentators missed the story because they couldn't see beyond their 1950s conceptual framework (McCarthyism! Conformity!). Today, Americans are running still looser and wilder, scandalizing even aficionados of human nature in the raw. Yet the media continue to explain our hormone-deranged national circus according to threadbare social-environmentalist rubrics (Media stereotypes! Discrimination!). But say you're not quite satisfied, for instance, that the only lesson of the O. J. Simpson saga concerns the need for domestic-violence awareness. Maybe you can't help wondering why our American Othello gets sacks of love-letters. ("Ooh, O.J., you're so passionate, so dangerous yet endangered, and, lately, so single!") Well, uh—Socialization! Victimization!

Vamps & Tramps: New Essays, by Camille Paglia (Vintage, 560 pp., $15)

This unilateral intellectual disarmament widens the gap between the mainstream media's words (increasingly sanctimonious) and pictures (increasingly lurid). Text now serves as a kind of disinfectant: so, for example, fashion magazines interlard their supermodel photospreads with prim feminists denouncing America's beauty obsession. To understand what fascinates us, watch what we watch, not what we say we read. Why *do* we find these sweltering, pagan images so compelling?

It was to this question and another one—"If society conditions individuals, what conditions societies?"—that Camille Paglia addressed herself in her first book, *Sexual Personae* (1990) with her theory about why we watch what we watch, which finally did justice to the "fantastically complex interpenetration" of nature and nurture. Miss Paglia traced the disturbing but indelible imprint of nature on classic Western art and literature, noting how biology recurrently surfaces in charismatic "sexual archetypes" such as the *femme fatale*.

Although a sociobiologist like Edward O. Wilson might begin with the queen bee, while Miss Paglia started with Queen Nefertiti, she reached some oddly congruent conclusions, which made her Public Enemy Number One of orthodox feminists. "Despite my deviant and rebellious beginnings," she wrote, "I have been led by my studies to reaffirm the most archaic myths about male and female." Notwithstanding the NC-17–rated subject matter and her nostalgia for the Rousseauvean Sixties, Miss Paglia's logic often leads her toward a version of Hobbesian conservatism: e.g., "Society is not the criminal but the force which keeps crime in check . . . the rapist is a man with too little socialization rather than too much."

Her sudden notoriety is due in part to her extraordinary powers of pattern recognition (she resembles a stand-up comic who's been channel-surfing for stereotypes since Sumer). But at a time when "multiculturalists" insist that only members of a given group should discuss that group's creative heritage, Miss Paglia reconfirms the value of the outsider's perspective. An outsider among outsiders, she's a lesbian who identifies with men rather than resents them (her idol is Rolling Stone Keith Richards). As an odd duck, she can scrutinize masculinity with detached lucidity, while most men are fish who don't know they're wet.

Miss Paglia's new book, *Vamps and Tramps*, is not Volume 2 of *Sexual Personae*, which was to extend her analysis to pop culture. This collection of recent journalism does, however, frequently follow that book's promised theme: "The commercial media . . . sidestep the liberal censors who have enjoyed such long control over book culture. In film, popular music, and commercials we contemplate all the daemonic myths and sexual stereotypes of paganism that reform movements from Christianity to feminism have never been able to eradicate." Her tardiness in completing her masterwork is disappointing to her admirers but not surprising; as this straight-to-paperback 560-page compendium exhaustively chronicles, she's been busy. After having only two articles published in the Seventies and Eighties, she has grabbed the Nineties by the lapels and won't let go until she has had her say.

Miss Paglia now writes extensively on both current controversies and the latest month's Scandal of the Century. Although I prefer her as analyst rather than advocate, even her manifestoes are uniquely frank. She blasts gay activists as "Stalinists" for their campaigns of intimidation and sophistry. She also explains how the Bobbitts, the Windsors, Amy Fisher and Joey Buttafuoco, Woody and Mia and Soon-Yi, and Bill and Hillary and Paula fit into her grand scheme. Frustratingly for her critics—and for admirers who wish she'd get back to scholarship—by focusing on the enduring allure of sexual archetypes, Miss Paglia explains the appeal of our tabloid divinities more successfully than normal news pundits, who can recognize only their supposed novelty. The crazier the world seems, the saner Camille Paglia sounds.

Unfortunately *Vamps & Tramps* suffers from the mixing of its author's three discordant personae: scholar, polemicist, and celebrity role model. While never dull, this unabridged compilation can be repetitious. Because Miss Paglia ties every topic into The Theory, most of her op-eds include a rushed recap of the tragicomic world view she elucidated with supreme clarity in *Sexual Personae*'s first chapter.

But Miss Paglia also wants to be an icon, the model for the woman of the future. Although her "street-wise feminism" is a bracing antidote to the naïveté of conventional feminism, does Miss Paglia really expect many women to identify with her deeply? Or is her natural audience mostly male? From Rush Limbaugh (who shared a convivial cigar with her) to Hollywood heman Oliver Stone (whose *Natural Born Killers* is a repulsively literal render-

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ing of a few of Miss Paglia's gorier views about the human animal), guys can relate to Miss Paglia man to man.

Finally, turbocharging her Amazon side for maximum media impact aggravates a weakness in a thinker who is heroically ambitious to comprehend human nature: she can't emotionally identify with mothers. "I have no talent for motherhood," she admits in a rare understatement. (That's why she doesn't notice that the most overwhelming evidence for the appeal of sexual archetypes is not in museums but in toy stores.) Reproduction is of course central to Miss Paglia's theory, but while she respects maternal women more than orthodox feminists do, she connects with childbirth only intellectually. Since superstardom requires emotion more than intellect, she forgets the centrality of motherhood and exhorts women to follow her in vamping and tramping fearlessly. She must guard against becoming further absorbed in her own singular personality. Otherwise, her edicts could become as unrealistic for women searching for the security that motherhood demands as that Michael Jordan advertising slogan "Be like Mike" was impracticable for gravity-challenged white boys. □

Kids These Days

DANIEL RADOSH

IN INTENT anyway, *Late Bloomers*, by David Lipsky and Alexander Abrams, is among the more serious in the long line of books and articles about the group of people variously known as Generation X, Baby Busters, and twentysomethings. Ours is a generation much maligned and apparently, at least to ourselves, endlessly fascinating. Ours is also a generation frequently misunderstood by writers of books and articles. Lipsky and Abrams set out to explain, with the help of impressive research, how these misunderstandings developed. They then go on to develop a whole new set of misunderstandings, and declare the discussion over.

Late Bloomers: Coming of Age in Today's America: The Right Place at the Wrong Time, by David Lipsky and Alexander Abrams (Times Books, 224 pp., $18)

A slim yet portentous tome, *Late Bloomers* is by turns infuriating, clever, insightful, and predictable. Mostly it's infuriating. In a field dominated by casual trend-spotting, Lipsky and Abrams have hard data and sociological information to contribute—all of which they undermine with a steady drumbeat of wrongheaded interpretation. Often I found myself wondering, "How can you be so smart and yet so clueless?"

Mr. Radosh is a columnist for the New York Press.

The premise of *Late Bloomers* is that today's twentysomethings are not fundamentally different from yesterday's. Beneath our façade of ironic detachment, we share the same all-American values as our parents and their parents. We want successful careers in well-paying fields, our own homes and cars, and nice, happy families.

This is meant to refute a public image that first appeared in a 1990 *Time* cover story. In that article, and in the countless more that followed it in that inexorable media-as-rolling-snowball way, twentysomethings were depicted as lazy, apathetic, indecisive whiners. As for our work ethic, our motto was said to be, "Earn the maximum for the minimum."

Lipsky and Abrams have a great deal of fun demolishing these myths by playing the media against themselves. From the mid to late 1980s, they point out, the conventional wisdom on Baby Busters was completely different. "They are planners. They look ahead with certainty. They have priorities," declared *The New York Times Magazine* in 1987.

"These young men and women are confident, ambitious, and smart," echoed *Fortune* in 1989. "Seldom have the personal attitudes of a graduating class meshed so neatly with the needs of businesses."

What changed between 1989 and 1990, say Lipsky and Abrams, was not young people, but the economy. When the recession hit, "it was easiest to believe that if young adults weren't working, it was because they *no longer wanted to work*. To believe that the economy had shifted in such a way as to make employment very hard to come by for anyone just out of college was dispiriting, and would have required a very different set of responses by the country."

It's a compelling argument, but it leads Lipsky and Abrams to a weird impasse. They recast the Generation X story as a debate between free will and determinism. Are twentysomethings doomed because they don't want to succeed, or because they *can't* succeed? Lipsky and Abrams believe they are defending young people by coming down on the side of determinism. You see, it's not our fault.

The only problem is they've robbed us of our right to say, Maybe we're not doomed at all. The authors really do mean *doomed*, and here's where it gets infuriating. Remember those all-American values? The career, the house and car, the family? For Lipsky and Abrams these are no mere goals but matters of Tillichian ultimate concern. Active participation in the economy (of which having a family, they say, is the quintessential expression) *is* the meaning of life.

That's why the book begins, "Think of the twentysomethings you know. Aren't they just the tiniest bit . . . disappointing?" How could they not be, living in grungy apartments or with their parents, working at copy shops? "People can smell [failure] on you," insist the authors. "Friends, family can be wonderfully supportive, but eventually they wonder when the story will change. We talked about this already, didn't we? Last year? So why are we still talking about it?" Imagine what the non-supportive people are saying.

It gets worse. We despair because "we've had to give up our taste in furnishings . . . in clothes and in food." We can't go to parties or date because we'll have to admit that we're underemployed (or "you look for people below your old ambition level, people who won't be offended by your ladder-spot in life"). We can't even joke about it because "there's a danger in gallows humor, that the brain will overhear it and think it's serious." A little whining would be a relief at this point.

Curiously, Lipsky and Abrams themselves, both in their late twenties, don't seem the least bit doomed. According to the authors' capsule biographies on

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the dust jacket, Lipsky is a widely published author who teaches at Johns Hopkins. Abrams is an attorney turned marketing consultant. Surely *they* can afford the house and family, and have enough left over for a dog.

But there's a bigger problem, which really threatens their thesis: Isn't it possible after all that money is not the be-all and end-all of existence? Lipsky and Abrams's dodge—that we don't want *a lot* of money, just *enough*—can't disguise the fact that they still have their priorities all wrong.

Early in the book they mention a 1990 survey in which 76 per cent of college freshmen listed "Being Very Well Off Financially" as their most important goal, while only 37 per cent chose "Developing a Meaningful Philosophy of Life." Lipsky and Abrams bring this up to show how normal we are, that we're not the slackers we're portrayed as in the media.

Still, you can't help wishing they had talked to that 37 per cent. After all, the twentysomethings *I* know aren't disappointing, despite grungy apartments or boring jobs. They have lives beyond furnishings, clothes, and food. They have writing, music, art, and passion. Many of them even have nice apartments and good jobs too. Being well off financially is probably number two on their lists. But just not having it as number one makes a hell of a difference.

Lipsky and Abrams call twentysomethings "late bloomers" because we can't afford, financially, to grow up. It's the last sentence in their book: "The ability to recognize and acquire the things you want must finally be what is meant by the word *adult*."

What do you say to someone who literally equates consumerism with maturity? That's not late blooming, that's stunted growth. □

LOOKING BACK

Into the Mind and Heart of God

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

HAVING noticed that hundreds of thousands of people rushed out to buy Pope John Paul's *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* in response to my review in these pages (December 5), I suggest that readers might also be interested in what thinkers have had a formative influence on the Pope. Many could be mentioned, but let me limit myself to Hans Urs von Balthasar. First, however, a more general word about the state of Christian theology as this century comes to a well-deserved end.

Nobody can know for sure, but it is perhaps inevitable that we speculate about which of our contemporaries will be read seriously, say, a hundred years from now. Among theologians of this century, one is reasonably confident that Karl Barth (d. 1968) will still be a figure to reckon with. That great Swiss Protestant was the single most important figure in shattering the hegemony of theological liberalism that is usually dated from Friedrich Schleiermacher in the early nineteenth century. Of course there are still many theological liberals around, Protestant and Catholic, but for the most part they are intellectual lightweights who have stumbled upon the nineteenth century with a sense of fresh discovery, and excitedly write popular books proclaiming their liberation from putatively oppressive orthodoxies.

I expect our theological descendants will also have to deal with our contemporary Wolfhart Pannenberg, a Lutheran at the University of Munich. Pannenberg's work is thoroughly ecumenical and breathtakingly comprehensive. He has written authoritatively on everything from the philosophy of science to the relationship between history and faith, and his three-volume *Systematic Theology* is now being brought out by Eerdmans in this country. There are no doubt others who will be read a century from now and, since history has many ironies in the fire, some of them will quite possibly be authors who are largely ignored today. Were I a betting man, however, and assuming that history continues until then and theology is still being read, I would put my money on the probability that in the year 2094 there will be many and lively seminars on the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar.

Balthasar (1905–1988) was and remains one of John Paul II's favorite theologians—some intimates of the Pope say his very favorite. In tribute to his contributions, John Paul made him a cardinal, but Balthasar died a few days before his scheduled investiture in Rome. Speaking at his Requiem Mass, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, the top theological authority under the Pope, agreed with those who described Balthasar as "the most cultured man in Europe." The volume, range, and depth of Balthasar's writing almost defy belief. During most of his life he was viewed as being somewhat on the margin of "mainstream" academic theology, and the bulk of his work was put out by a publishing house he established largely for that purpose. Among serious theologians today, however, there is what might be called a bull market in Balthasar studies. Many of his works have appeared in English only in the past ten years (mainly from Ignatius Press in San Francisco), and many more are still untranslated. So it is not surprising that, especially in this country, people are only now discovering Hans Urs von Balthasar. It is to date largely a Catholic discovery, but there are signs of growing interest among Protestants and Orthodox.

Born in Switzerland, Balthasar studied philosophy and literature at Zurich, Vienna, and Berlin before he entered the Society of Jesus and came under the tutelage of Henri de Lubac and others who proposed a "new theology" that was, in fact, formed by an immersion in Biblical studies and the writings of the early Church Fathers. Balthasar wrote prolifically on the Fathers, also publishing new translations; at the same time he became intensely engaged with French literature. This conjunction of the study of the Fathers (or patristics, as the field is called) and of literature was crucial to Balthasar's lifelong exploration into the relationship between truth and beauty. Then there was Adrienne von Speyr, whom he met when he was student chaplain at Basle.

She was a medical doctor, a professor of history, and a visionary, perhaps a mystic. Balthasar received her into the Catholic Church and devoted himself to publishing and promoting her writings. Most students of Balthasar seem puzzled by his effusive praise of

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Dr. Speyr, including his claim that his most important insights were derived from her vision. In any event, together they wanted to establish a secular institute, a community in which members would continue with their normal work in the world, but the Jesuits disapproved. So in 1950 Balthasar very reluctantly left the Society of Jesus. Perhaps because he never held an academic post, he was unconstrained by the limits of defined disciplines and took on almost everything. He wrote a major work on Karl Barth (recently in a new translation from Ignatius), but also wrote on Martin Buber, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Martin Heidegger, and on John the Evangelist, Irenaeus, Augustine, Aquinas, and Dante.

Although some of his works are directed to a general audience, Balthasar is never light reading. His style has been called bewitching and seductive; reading him is as much a spiritual and devotional exercise as it is an intellectual challenge. He is a writer whom to understand one must submit oneself and let him lead where his thought leads him. A session with Balthasar is like an expedition. Afterward, you may not be as enthralled as you were at the time, but nobody I know has ever regretted going on the trip. And for most of us who have been there, the seduction is formative and lasting.

Any effort to summarize in a few sentences what is so distinctive and compelling about Balthasar is doomed to failure. But a few things can be said. He taught that all of reality is Trinitarian; man lives in responsive obedience to the unqualified obedience of the Son to the Father in the power of the Spirit. The Son is in solidarity with man by sharing fully in our being forsaken by God, and thereby restoring us to perfect unity with God, the Father, Son, and Spirit. All of this is perceived by acute attentiveness to revelation, but also to human experience. As John Paul II says in *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, "Our faith is profoundly anthropological." Human existence is coexistence; it is receptivity and response to the other in community, and above all to God, Who enters into community with us, thus drawing us into community with Him.

In his massive work *Herrlichkeit* (in English, *The Glory of the Lord*), Balthasar proposes a "theology of beauty." A theological aesthetics is not an aesthetic theology, but an insight into the way in which the "form" of reality is the truth of reality. Form (*Gestalt*) is key to Balthasar's thought. In His person, life, death, resurrection, and abiding presence in His body the Church, Jesus Christ (*Gestalt Christi*) is the "form of God." Love—which is the gift of self in response to the other—is the beauty (*pulchrum*) of God Himself. The *Gestalt Christi* reveals not only the mystery of finite being but also the Source of being, which is the communion of love which we call the Trinity, and to which we are called.

And all of this, mind you, is presented in the most scintillatingly sophisticated conversation with contemporary philosophy, art, and literature. There is really little else in the history of Christian thought quite like it. At points Balthasar risks pressing at the edges of received doctrine—notably with respect to the hope that all humanity will finally be saved, and on his view that Christ's descent into Hell was not a triumph but the sign of His final abandonment by the Father—but he was always obedient to the *Gestalt Christi* and its reflection in the Church. He is a vigorously orthodox theologian, as witness the praise of such as Cardinal Ratzinger and John Paul II.

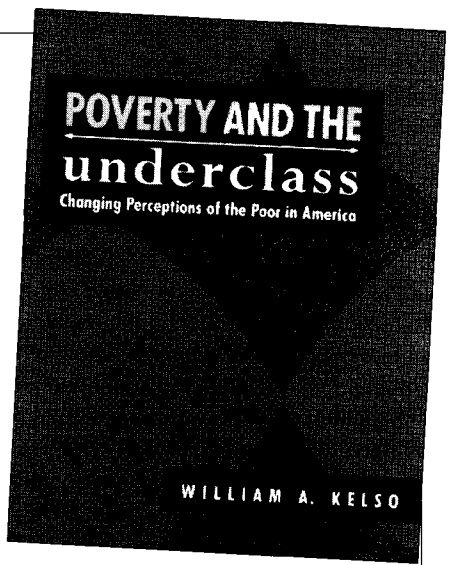
For those whose appetites may be whetted, I mention a few of the books by Balthasar now available in English, keeping in mind that new volumes are appearing at a regular pace. (Unless otherwise indicated, the books are published by Ignatius.) Books that are more accessible to the non-specialist: *Prayer*, *Credo: Meditations on the Apostles' Creed*, *You Have Words of Eternal Life*, *The God Question and Modern Man* (Seabury), *The Heart of the World*, *In the Fullness of Faith: On the Centrality of the Distinctively Catholic*, and *Dare We Hope That All Men Be Saved?* Those trained in Protestant theology will relish *The Theology of Karl Barth*, about as rewarding an engagement as there is with the relationship between "nature" and "grace." And, for those who are ready for the full treatment, there are the eight

"A thoughtful analysis of one of America's most vexing social problems. [Kelso] eschews the platitudes of both left and right to examine the intractable nature of poverty and its diverse causes. He is especially insightful in his dissection of the role culture plays in poverty—and for the concern government should have for the character of its citizens."

—Linda Chavez
Author of *Out of the Barrio: Toward a New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation*

"An excellent introduction to the debate about poverty in America."

—Lawrence M. Mead
Author of *The New Politics of Poverty*



In this timely work, William A. Kelso analyzes how the persistence of poverty has reversed liberal and conservative positions during the last 30 years, and suggests that the arguments of both sides are misguided. Offering new explanations for the persistence of poverty, Kelso looks beyond familiar labels such as "underclass" and "family values" to analyze poverty not as a monolithic condition, but as a multidimensional problem.

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large volumes of *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*. Finally, there is a useful general introduction, *Hans Urs von Balthasar: His Life and Work* (edited by David L. Schindler), and just out from Continuum, a marvelous study by Edward Oakes, *Pattern of Redemption: The Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar*.

Be bewitched. Be seduced. Enter into the mind and heart of one who, I am persuaded, leads us into the mind and heart of God. Looking on the world, I hope, from a quite different perspective by then, I will not be at all surprised by the number of believers who will be similarly persuaded in the year 2094. □

FILM

Two Cheers for Christmas

JOHN SIMON

DISCLOSURE is one of the most stimulating movies in many a moon, even though its High Computerese is not one of my languages, and the speed and intricacy of the plot left me chasing after it well-nigh winded. What makes the film fascinating is its high-velocity twisting and turning, turning what looks like a racetrack into the most daedal of labyrinths. The mind runs ragged, and the emotions cling to their Nautilus for dear life, as you root for the good people and dread the rest, whose machinations are subtler than usual in their satanic satin-smoothness.

Tom Sanders is an executive at DigiCom in Seattle, a high-tech firm whose vice president he thinks he is about to become. He has accumulated plenty of stock in years of faithful service; his wife, Susan, is a successful lawyer, and they have two motion-picture-perfect children. They live in a model house across Puget Sound, are rich, and, after DigiCom's impending merger with an even grander corporation, will be richer yet. Then everything collapses. Bob Garvin, the company's founder, a vain and shifty fellow, has taken a fancy to Meredith Johnson, a young woman recently transferred from the Silicon Valley office, and appoints her to the job Tom hoped for, thus making her his boss. Ten years ago, Tom and Meredith had a hot-and-heady affair, which she, a ruthless predator not likely to let Tom's marriage stand in her way, plans to resume. She summons him into her office, well stocked with their favorite rare wine, locks him in with her, and proceeds to seduce him in a scene of extraordinary animal sexuality. He resists, just barely; the next day Meredith accuses him of sexual harassment.

The dramatis personae are sharply enough honed for the cleanest—or is it dirtiest?—of shaves. Boss Garvin, played by Donald Sutherland as a white- haired and bearded tabby cat (have you ever seen more dishonest-looking white hair?), is all velvet claws and butter-wouldn't-melt-in-my-mouth words, smiles, and inflections that go down like poisoned milk. His chief henchman is portrayed by Dylan Baker as a creature as slippery as a fish, but with scales to rip the hands it slips through. As Susan, Tom's sorely tested but staunch spouse, Caroline Goodall is exactly right: a clean-cut, soignée woman, appealing but not with sex appeal.

Quite the opposite is the Meredith of Demi Moore, a monster of sensual suavity, with streams of liquid fire and fluent ice always on tap, ready to burn or chill you into submission. Miss Moore gives a suitably scary performance, her black hair coiffed into something like an antique leather helmet, her pouty good looks the de luxe container for the scorpion within. And as Tom, Michael Douglas is a knowing combination of tough decency, honest bewilderment, and fearful striking power. He is a symbol of the country that made him: slow to rouse, but mighty in legitimate self-defense.

Barry Levinson, who started impressively as the director of *Diner*, but whose subsequent work has been consistently inconsistent, now comes back into his own through canny direction, flawless casting, appositely hard-edged cinematography from Tony Pierce-Roberts, and a thrilling score from that old master, Ennio Morricone, as chic to the ear as shivery on the spine.

■ In the customary Yuletide onslaught of movies, there are, as usual, films that might fool you, and that your faithful critic could not yet cover but feels duty bound to warn you about. Beware, then, of the blandishments of what is indecently called ***Mary Shelley's Frankenstein***, even though I have it on good authority that Mary Shelley asked for her name to be removed from the credits. (Speaking of indecency, Roger Ebert found this *mot* correctly attributed to me in *USA Today*, but pusillanimously ascribed it to some anonymous wit.) ***Interview with the Vampire*** should be of interest only to casuists wishing to debate who is worse, Tom Cruise or Brad Pitt, though the laurel for loathsomeness is finally snatched by Antonio Banderas. Equally appalling is ***Mrs. Parker and the Vicious Circle***, by Robert Altman's untalented but pretentious protégé, Alan Rudolph. In it, the gifted Jennifer Jason Leigh makes an ass of herself as a cartoonish Dorothy Parker, and the Algonquin Round Table is literal-mindedly represented as an enormous oaken tabletop more suited to King Arthur's Table Round, with hapless celebrities so jammed together they couldn't possibly manipulate a knife and fork.

No less to be shunned is the rubbishy ***Red***, the third and, thank God, last part of a color trilogy by the Polish charlatan Krzysztof Kieslowski, who proclaimed his retirement with this film but who, like other conmen, will surely wiggle out of his promise. Another Pole, Roman Polanski, who unlike K.K. once had talent, offers a further vulgarization of Ariel Dorfman's already crass enough stage play, ***Death and the Maiden***, which even fine performances by Sigourney Weaver and Ben Kingsley cannot redeem. The prize post-Thanksgiving turkey is ***Legends of the Fall***, which tries to graft a woman's weepie onto a he-man's action flick, and fails in both categories. And do not count on Woody Allen for Christmas cheer with ***Bullets over Broadway***, in which the one comic idea is overexploited and underachieved, and which suffers also from outrageous performances by Dianne Wiest and Jennifer Tilly, with Woody sharing in the blame.

■ But to end this far from complete survey on a more sanguine note, let me tell you about ***Nobody's Fool***, a mod-

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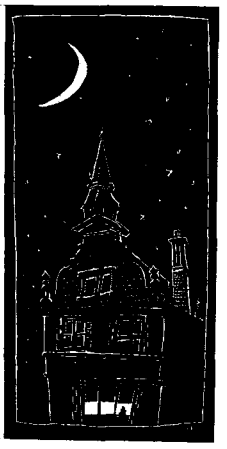
est movie that nevertheless gets to the root of truth about so-called ordinary people, showing them in their authentic complexity, their flavorous quirkiness.



As Robert Benton has directed his own adaptation of Richard Russo's novel, this is the story of Sully, an ornery but decent aging construction worker in an Upstate New York town, who long ago ran out on his family but, as he says, never got farther than five blocks away. He works mostly for Carl Roebuck, a rich young loafer, lecher, skinflint, who, however, is the only game in town for Sully, with whom he is locked in never-ending love–hate. Sully is the sole tenant and sort-of super in the house of Miss Beryl, the slightly eccentric but canny and kindly mother of a rapacious son, who manages to land the townsfolk in serious trouble with spurious land speculation. Sully's own son, Peter, is an English-lit professor unjustly let go by his college, and equally unjustly abandoned by his wife and one of their twins on Thanksgiving Day at his mother's house. But then, Sully's daughter-in-law can no more stand her mother-in-law than Sully himself could when he was married to her. Everyone, good or bad, has his reasons (as Jean Renoir discovered way back when), which is what makes life so bedeviling, and movies that approach it honestly so interesting.

Sully is a flawed hero, not only because of a bad knee that makes this handsome sexagenarian hobble awkwardly, but also because his stubbornness about other people often makes him do senseless things in preference to just as feasible smart ones. He is attracted to the prettiest young woman in town, Toby, the wife Carl Roebuck steadily and flagrantly cheats on. She, too, has a soft spot for him, but can anything come of that? Still, life is strange. Why would Peter, the abandoned son, happily consent to come and do manual work for his scapegrace father? And why would Sully's only co-worker and best friend, Rub, so bitterly resent the likable Peter's coming to work with them? Many are the convolutions of the human mind, and near-infinite are the snakings of the human heart, yet *Nobody's Fool* has a firm but unsuffocating grip on both.

There are many quiet pleasures here, first and foremost the late Jessica Tandy in one of her last performances as Miss Beryl. The temptation to overplay such an endearingly odd old lady must be almost irresistible, but as the actress showed in *Driving Miss Daisy* and several other films, she could get more out of dignified restraint than others could out of the most dazzling pyrotechnics. Paul Newman, too, is a deftly judged Sully, skillfully juggling the oddball with the universal in his nature, and making the most of every ironically lowered eyelid and salty retort. As his one-legged, ineffectual but scrappy lawyer, Gene Saks, better known as a director, gives a nice, unsugary performance; as the forlorn and endearing Peter, Dylan Walsh is superb. Alexander Goodwin is lovable as the nicer of two grandsons, an unadulteratedly unadult kid; Bruce Willis and Melanie Griffith are tartly authentic as the warring Roebucks. In the tiny parts of an aging barmaid and a pawky judge, Margo Martindale and Philip Bosco contribute small but flawless gems. □

MANNERS IN HAWAII

True West

RICHARD BROOKHISER

ONE OF THE great surprises of Hawaii is how American so much of the island state is. Waikiki is indistinguishable from any place on the mainland with a patch of warm sand and shoals of pale tourists. At the other extreme, there are tracts of land on the outer islands as arid and empty as the West. The people who live in them amuse themselves the way Westerners do—by using the road signs for target practice.

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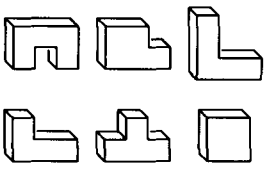

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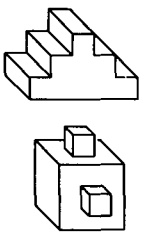

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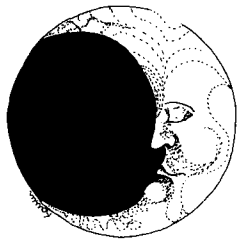
Yet identity politics has come even here. Taking a leaf from "Native Americans'" book Native Hawaiians have begun to discover and proclaim assorted grievances and goals. The second great surprise is how American even the Hawaiian identity is.

Hawaii is the only independent country America ever ingested, and many Americans didn't want it. Thomas "Czar" Reed, Republican Speaker of the House in the 1890s, a protectionist and an anti-expansionist, wanted to let the islands alone. So did Democratic President Grover Cleveland. When pro-American planters overthrew the last monarch in January 1893 and applied for annexation, the incoming Cleveland Administration refused the gift. The disgruntled rebels declared a republic, and bided their time until the election of William McKinley, who re-opened negotiations. Hawaii became a territory in 1900, and a state 59 years later.



There is a pretender to the Hawaiian throne, who unofficially receives delegations from Polynesian chieftains, and in whose head visions of slot machines dance, inspired by the success of American Indian casinos. He shares the ethnic Hawaiian movement with half a dozen other grouplets, which squabble ineffectually. The number of ethnic Hawaiians grows rapidly, for the same reason that the population of American Indians does—because people think it is cool to be one, and so claim the identity even if it is only a fraction of their heritage. (The two native Hawaiians I met on a recent trip were surnamed Purdy and Helm.) Even so, ethnic Hawaiians constitute less than an eighth of the state's population. Local politics is firmly in the hands of the descendants of Japanese agricultural laborers and is likely to remain so, unless an influx of mainlanders breaks their hammerlock.

The only ethnic Hawaiians who grow up speaking the Hawaiian language are a community of about two hundred on Niihau, a privately owned island at the western end of the chain. This twin bastion of private property and feudalism has no cars and no television. It is hard to visit, though hunters can manage it, since the island is overrun with wild pigs, which the owners would like to exterminate.

If "pure" Hawaiian culture exists only in an artificially maintained human terrarium, that is partly because the Hawaiians themselves, beginning in the early nineteenth century, willingly embraced and Hawaiianized a number of foreign elements.

The first was Christianity. The odd fact about the conversion of Hawaii is that the native religion died before the missionaries arrived. In 1819, Kamehameha II, the second king of the islands, abolished the taboo system and destroyed the idols. A number of explanations for his deed have been proposed. Since the late eighteenth century, Hawaiians had been observing European and American sailors who did not keep the taboos, and yet the gods did not punish them. The taboo system weighed especially heavily on women, and the new king was strongly influenced by his mother. (One of his first post-taboo actions was to dine with her in public.) My own guess is that the Hawaiian gods were a particularly bloodthirsty and unpleasant lot, and it was a relief to be rid of them. By chance or Providence, a party of missionaries from New England arrived on the island of Hawaii in 1820. Within twenty years, they had invented an alphabet, translated the Bible, founded two newspapers, and written a constitution based on the Ten Commandments. This was the way of the WASP when it was firing on all cylinders. Today the state has an almost Southern proliferation of churches. Every variety of Protestant and Protestantoid (Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses), as well as Catholics, has set up a steeple.

Another area of cultural cross-fertilization has been music. Hawaiian folk guitar music is called slack-key, or *paniolo*. The first name refers to the way the strings are tuned, altering at least one to get an open chord. The second, derived from *Español*, reflects the music's history. In the early nineteenth century, King Kamehameha III visited California when it was still owned by Mexico, and was inspired to import Mexican cowboys to round up wild cattle on the island of Hawaii. The foreign cowboys stayed only a little while, but they left their guitars and their songs behind. The same music that went to the islands also made its way into American cowboy singing, so that Hawaiian folk music, which is played even on Niihau, is a distant in-law of country-and-western. At its best, it is rhythmically straightforward, with sweet and slightly sad melodies. One of its most famous singers, who died recently, was a part-Hawaiian named Sonny Chillingworth—a name that could as easily belong to a Delta bluesman, or an Appalachian fiddler. So the pollen of language and genes mixes with the pollen of music, in the middle of the Pacific.

The Hawaiian experience is instructive in an era of multiculturalism. The fact that other cultures which press their claims on this one are all hodgepodges too should give us the confidence to pick among their traits, choosing only those which suit us. After all, they have done the same. □

Mr. Brookhiser is an NR *senior editor and the author of* The Way of the WASP.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

The Afterlife and Other Stories, by John Updike (Knopf, 316 pp., $24)

"THE Billingses, so settled in their ways, found in their fifties that their friends were doing sudden, surprising things." So begins the title story of this, Mr. Updike's 11th short-story collection and his first in 7 years. After 35 years and over 40 books, we may ask what more he could possibly have to say. But the question would assume that a writer possesses an exhaustible stock of story-making material. Chronicler of the tired and malingering ways of the Volvo set, Updike is growing older, and his latest work takes on both deeper shades and brighter tints. Carter Billings is beset not with the anxieties of the struggling or middle years, but with the numb regret of the well-to-do early-retirement years. He lazily awaits transformation. Updike doesn't lounge in torpor; he leads his characters down unexpected byways of experience and perception that give this book a peculiarly optimistic, even jaunty, tone in places. There are travels to England, Italy, Ireland, the Greek islands, all backdrops for domestic stresses and inner liberations. The "afterlife" of the title—a lodestar for all

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the stories—may hint at eternal possibilities, but it needn't. Another jewel, called "Conjunction," has the taste of a finely built fable. While Updike may not be the most profound American writer living, he is among the last of the craftsman-writers for whom the story's the thing, not empty experimentation. These stories pass the only test that matters—they bear re-reading. —TRACY LEE SIMMONS

The Quotable Paul Johnson, edited by George Marlin, Richard P. Rabatin, and Heather Richardson Higgins (Farrar, Straus, 329 pp., $30)

I USED to think that *The Quotable So-and-So* books were only for die-hard fans of certain authors, or for aspiring after-dinner speakers. But there is much to enjoy in works of this sort. You can be sure to get plenty of cognitional zing per line, not having to wade through too much text to get to the high points. This particular book is a good example. It delights on every page with a combination of thought-provoking insight and personal anecdote already familiar to fans of Paul Johnson, including Johnson's witty observations about such things as the intellectual (who is "fascinated by power") and academia ("the traditional home of lost causes"), as well as clever commentary on the personal qualities of rulers ("the sins of the Kennedys multiply with the generations"), writers ("Will Lillian Hellman, like her hero Stalin, ever be buried in decent obscurity? . . . there is plenty of life, and lies, in the old girl yet"), and popes (John XXIII "was exceptionally agile at establishing close personal relationships without conceding issues of principle—the essence of diplomatic method"). This book is a lively read, a worthwhile change of pace. —MATTHEW CAROLAN

The Tory View of Landscape, by Nigel Everett (Yale, 264 pp., $40)

FEW people take things as seriously as the British, and there are few things the British take more seriously than gardening. As Mr. Everett makes clear in this extremely thorough analysis of the eighteenth-century English ideology of gardening, the Englishman's view of how the earth was to be shaped by human hands was deeply rooted in how he viewed Englishness and where he thought the English nation was headed. Tories such as Burke were obviously more traditional, advocating a preservation of the rough-hewn English landscape of yore, whereas Whigs such as Walpole and Capability Brown wished to clear, uproot, and thoroughly modernize the countryside. However, according to Mr. Everett, a self-professed conservative with a revisionist glint in his eye, our reading of the earlier debate must be radically recast. For the Tory view of gardening, by resting upon tradition, tried to uphold the traditional bonds of charity and trust between people and classes, whereas the Whig attempt to go full speed into the future often heartlessly did away with those older bonds. Though it is somewhat odd to find Tories as bleeding-heart do-gooders and Whigs as hard-nosed industrialists, this book is a persuasive if quite specialized re-examination of an interesting chapter in the history of taste.
—JAMES GARDNER

My Life as a Radical Lawyer, by William M. Kunstler, with Sheila Isenberg (Birch Lane, 432 pp., $22.50)

IT IS NO surprise that both Oliver Stone and Spike Lee have cast William Kunstler in their movies; they all share a quaint conspiracy-theorist's view of the world. Indeed, according to Mr. Kunstler, his career as a "radical" lawyer—from his representation of the Chicago Seven to his defense of the World Trade Center bombing defendants—has involved a con- stant struggle against a massive state and federal conspiracy, in which a hostile President, governor, or FBI chief has invariably "programmed" the judiciary to rule against his client. With these odds, one wonders how he ever wins a case. Even stranger is the fact that in this memoir Mr. Kunstler never tells us just what it is he has been fighting for all these years. Instead, he wavers between the ACLU-esque goal of defending any unpopular person or group and the "movement" lawyer's need to advance a political agenda. But exactly what cause was furthered by defending such clients as John Gotti and El Sayyid Nosair is difficult to say. Perhaps it is all preparation for the violent revolution, which Mr. Kunstler deems "inevitable." Come the revolution, this book will be invaluable. —ADAM FREEDMAN

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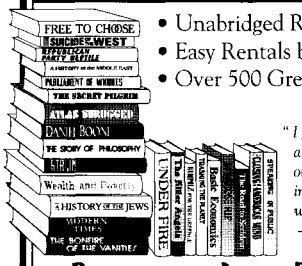

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MEMORANDUM

To: All NR Classified Advertising Clients
From: Tony Savage

In the spirit of this season of giving and gratitude, I would like to personally thank all of you who advertised in these pages over the past year. Lots of good stuff was bought and sold (at least we *hope* it was all good), and we trust that the transactions were always beneficial to both parties. It was a pleasure doing business with each and every one of you, and of course we thank you for making the Right Choice for your advertising. I look forward to continuing our relationship in 1995, and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year.

And by the way, all those anti-Clinton T-shirt and bumper sticker ads may not have been *entirely* responsible for the grand and glorious Republican Ascendancy on November 8th. But they certainly helped! Only two more years to go—or less!

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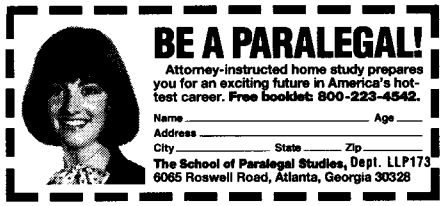

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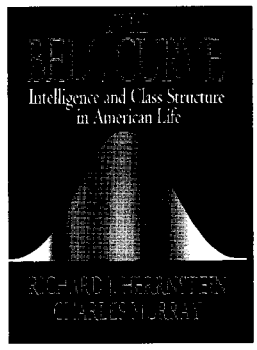

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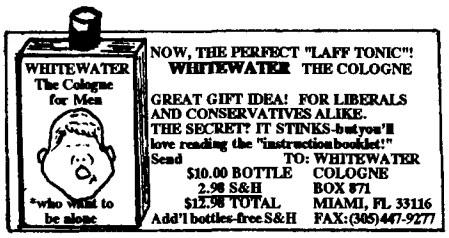
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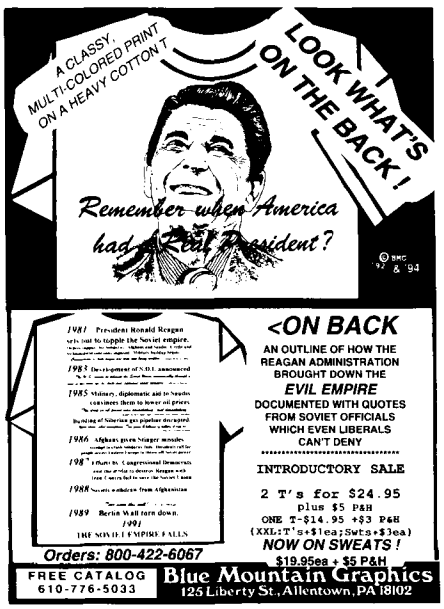
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BACEVICH

(Continued from page 53)

contribute to broader U.S. interests such as containing Islamic fundamentalism, suppressing terrorism, and assuring access to Middle East oil.

2. Any peacekeeping mission must be affordable within the context of constrained U.S. military and economic resources.

3. While no mission will be risk-free, a Golan commitment must not expose American personnel to undue hazards; there can be no repeat of Beirut. To the extent that hazards remain, the American people must accept them with a clear-eyed understanding of what they entail—even after the hoopla of ceremonies on the South Lawn has become a distant memory.

4. Finally, any Golan peacekeeping mission must be sized so as to affect only minimally the U.S. capacity to pursue important interests elsewhere in the world.

Such criteria are stringent, but they are not unreasonable. Nor are they prohibitive. They do point toward a peacekeeping force of modest size and assigned a limited mandate.

Eliminated from the outset is the option of stationing a force large enough to mount a credible defense of the Golan and therefore presumably capable of deterring any would-be aggressor. This "fighting deterrent" option fails on several counts: cost, drain on U.S. resources, limits on American global flexibility, impact on American–Israeli relations, and risk to American soldiers dispatched into an environment that is by implication hostile. Most of all, the deterrent option fails because the very need for such a force implies that the peace process would have produced not genuine peace but a continuation of armed truce, with American forces replacing the IDF along the Golan. Both Israel and Syria have already shown themselves more than competent to manage such an armed truce without direct American assistance.

If not deterrence, then what? The proper mission of any American peacekeeping force should be to monitor and report compliance with conditions mandated for the Golan as one facet of a comprehensive peace accord. Among those conditions should be provisions for demilitarizing the Golan and its environs while preserving for both Syria and Israel some early-warning capability. The force required for such a mission would be small and lightly equipped—not substantially larger than the two-battalion United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) already present on the Golan, which for two decades has done yeoman work supervising the ceasefire.

Such a force need not consist entirely of Americans. Yet even if it includes contingents from other nations, a predominantly American character will enhance its credibility. A useful model would be the Sinai-based Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), created in the aftermath of Camp David and administered by an American director general with a corps of civilian American technicians complementing its multinational uniformed contingent. Particularly instructive is the efficient and businesslike way the MFO has fulfilled its mission. These qualities stem in part from the fact that the MFO, almost unique among the peacekeeping entities scattered around the world, operates outside the UN's umbrella.

In the early stages of implementing any peace accord, each party's confidence that the other will be faithful to its pledges is likely to be tenuous. U.S. leadership in establishing an effective peacekeeping presence could certainly help allay suspicions, nudging the bilateral Syrian–Israeli relationship toward something resembling true peace. With that in mind, the United States should make clear from the outset that it views any Golan peacekeeping operation as an interim measure. Fifteen years after Camp David, U.S. infantry battalions continue to rotate into the Sinai at six-month intervals, a mission that bids fair to extend into perpetuity. That the U.S. should find itself still obliged to carry on with this particular gesture of "confidence building" is absurd. To preclude such an outcome on the Golan, any commitment there should come with an explicit "sunset clause." Accordingly, the peacekeepers' charter should include encouraging direct Syrian–Israeli contacts along the border, working to create conditions in which the U.S. presence becomes superfluous.

Finally, if the rationale for any such enterprise is to secure authentic peace, and if the prospective treaty points also toward a new U.S.–Syrian relationship, then no American peacekeeper, military or civilian, should embark for the Golan until President Hafez Assad has signaled in unambiguous terms Syria's intention to adhere henceforth to accepted standards of conduct. At a minimum, that commitment must include severing all ties with terrorists on Syrian territory and in Lebanon; disarming Hezbollah; and ending the transshipment of Iranian military assistance to terrorist organizations. Absent demonstrable assurances of such changed behavior, U.S. participation in any Golan peacekeeping operation in any capacity would be an open invitation to disaster. □

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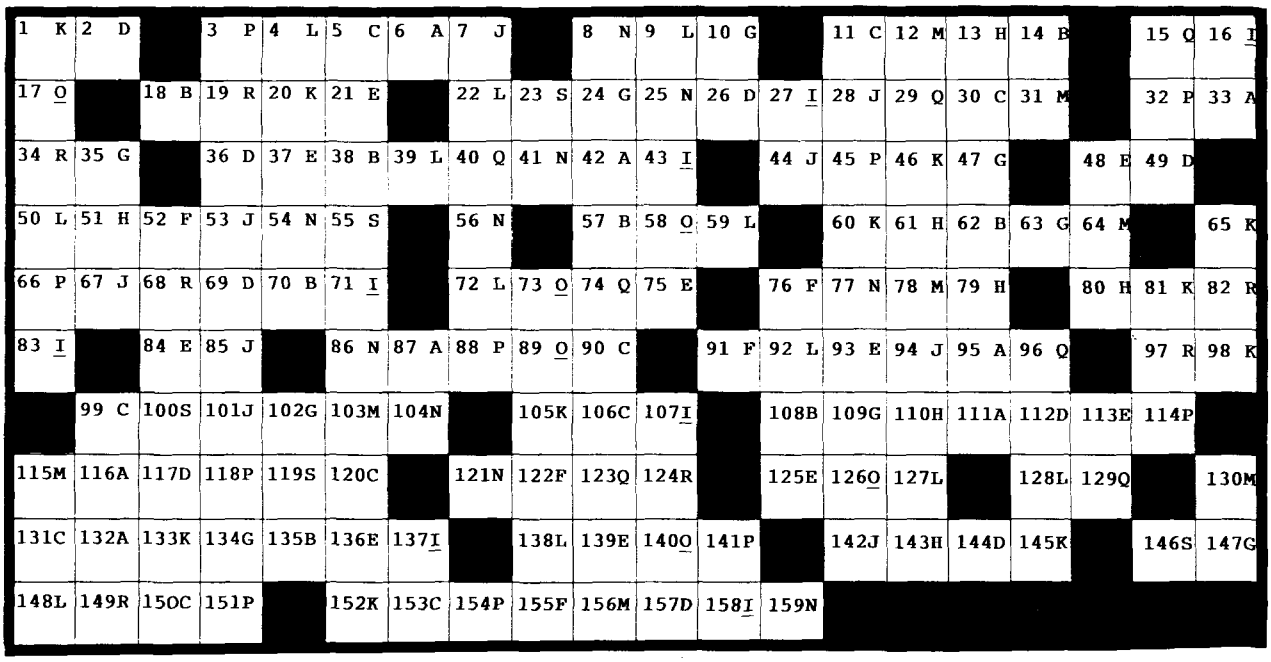
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Creepy — 95 116 132 111 87 42 6 33

B. United States, e.g. — 38 14 108 62 18 57 135 70

C. Omnipresent — 150 131 90 99 120 11 106 30 153 5

D. Noxious fume — 117 49 2 112 69 36 26 157 144

E. Kind of convention speech — 136 93 125 84 139 113 21 37 48 75

F. Wash — 52 155 76 122 91

G. Darwin subject — 47 134 109 63 102 35 147 10 24

H. Santa's runway — 13 143 61 80 79 51 110

I. Amassed — 137 43 83 16 107 158 71 27

J. Haven for Blackford Oakes — 85 28 101 53 44 67 94 142 7

K. Pertaining to a medium's emanations — 145 60 105 98 65 133 81 20 46 1 152

L. Big House winner (2 words) — 127 59 9 72 148 128 92 39 50 138 22 4

M. Swore — 78 115 103 130 31 156 12 4

N. Loomed — 121 77 54 104 86 8 56 41 159 25

O. C_2H_6 — 58 140 73 126 89 17

P. Alliterative plumbing company (hyph.) — 151 88 32 141 66 118 45 3 154 114

Q. Non-believer — 123 29 96 74 40 129 15

R. Passed the time of day — 82 149 34 124 97 19 68

S. Crucial planet — 100 23 119 55 146

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram. A. J. BACEVICH: *On Clinton:* "Americans have long taken harmonious civil–military relations for granted. Just perhaps, they can no longer afford to do so—lest they inadvertently invite a larger military problem of their own."

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Nuking Newt

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 12

At a recent gathering of my peers, no small achievement, one observer volunteered that he had never, "including Nixon," seen so concentrated a battery of derogation as has been fired in the past three weeks on Newt Gingrich. The operative scare-word, he pointed out, is "scary." And indeed Mr. Gingrich is, in the eyes of his chattering critics, scary. But he is also a great deal else.

In search of the definitive demotion one turns to *The New Yorker*, wherein the talented David Remnick (he wrote *Lenin's Tomb*) presides over Beltway opinion. After reading his profile of Mr. Gingrich you might go away thinking him not scary in the sense that Dr. Strangelove was scary—Mr. Remnick doesn't discover a nuclear missile under Newt's bed—but scary in the sense that he has blindsided America into giving him a post of critical responsibility without the public's having weighed his extraordinary personal disqualifications.

Like what? Well, although he is for family values, Newt has been divorced. Well, divorces are very sad events, but they do happen widely, as for instance, in our time, to Adlai Stevenson and Ronald Reagan. But his critics mix much melodrama into the story of the divorce, the punchline of which is that Mr. Gingrich brought in to his wife "during her recovery" a pad of paper on which he had written out the suggested arrangements for the divorce. It is made to sound very much like the landlord visiting the dying widow moments before the end demanding extra money to pay for the leaky roof. It isn't until some time later that one learns the former Mrs. Gingrich is very much alive, 16 years after the hospital transaction.

Mr. Remnick reminds us (most people knew it) that Gingrich did not serve in the war, though Remnick smiles bravely while acknowledging that Gingrich's explanation for not going to Vietnam (he pleaded parenthood, which was a deferrable event) has never been shielded by such "nervous indirection" as characterized Clinton. But this does not prevent him from observing that notwithstanding Vietnam, Gingrich "has posed as a hawk in Congress." What is the difference between posing as a hawk and being a hawk, one wonders. Abe Lincoln was one hell of a hawk back then, though he never himself saw action.

In assessing Gingrich the goal is totalist—no concessions are made. Well yes, he got a PhD and taught history—but he never got tenure. On the other hand, that is not so unusual, at age 28. In any case, Gingrich is "no great scholar." That's right, nor has he ever said that scholarship was his primary interest. (At the time Adlai Stevenson, the intellectuals' dreamboy, was nominated for President, not one listing under his name appeared in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, where minimal journalistic and scholarly events are recorded.) "He is also reminiscent of the middle-brow thinkers of the nineteenth century who won their fame explaining all in a single volume: Henry George, whose *Progress and Poverty* led to the single-tax movement . . ."

Henry George a middlebrow thinker! What would that make of such as Albert Jay Nock, one of George's biographers, who deemed George among the seminal minds of the economic renaissance?

But you can't win. Gingrich is a hypocrite, an eccentric, a woozy futurist; he is lacking in wit, given to schematic political constellations. Why, he even makes you-know-who look good! Newt cannot wear the white hat of Ronald Reagan. "He wears his black hat proudly and squints, looking back to the future."

Now that kind of rhetoric betrays true fear, and one wonders what are the grounds for this fear. That under Newt, Americans will be permitted to starve? That isn't, really, very likely, but under pre-Newt, Americans are very widely permitted to be killed, mugged, raped, casually impregnated, exposed day and night to the sepsis of modern culture, rendered illiterate by indulgent inattention . . . Dear Newt is not going to change all of that; the prophet Jonah would not succeed against Nineveh. But what we are learning is that those nice people at the opinion stands of American liberalism just don't like Old Testament sounds. Scary. □

"I only have to work one day a year—I sell batteries door-to-door on Christmas morning."

By Bread Alone

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 25

Newt Gingrich said, Let's do a constitutional amendment on school prayer.

The gunfire began to sound. A little slow at first, like the Nazis after taking Warsaw, getting ready for their Blitzkrieg. First, Bob Dole said that such an amendment would take "a little doing," which is how Sheriff Gary Cooper would have reacted to the suggestion that he eliminate horse thieving.

Then the thunderers came, ACLU types plus those politicians who have been satellized over the years by the superstition that the First Amendment, denying establishment of religion, denies also the right of public schools to make way for common prayer.

Let's attend first, Dole is understood to be saying, to important things like crime and welfare. This is another way of saying, Let's leave the prayer business for a rainy day. Which means, Let's forget it—because there is never a rainy day in Congress.

There was never a clearer reminder of the maxim that we do not live by bread alone, if the reader will forgive this attempt to establish religion by quoting from the Bible. Dole and the congressional establishment should be reminded of one or two truisms:

—The first is that we live in a self-governing republic. All those paeans we hear every five minutes to "democracy" are supposed to describe those societies in which the rules by which we are governed are those rules we choose to be governed by. Poll after poll informs us

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that somewhere between 75 and 80 per cent of the American people would like to see common prayer in their schools.

Now the democratic imperative is correctly interrupted by a single qualification, namely the rights of the minority. The consolidation of modern constitutional principle is that (with presumably the exception of the right of the majority to tax as much of the minority's property as it chooses to do) you have to stop at those No Trespassing junctions enumerated by the Bill of Rights. That means you can't compel someone to be a witness against himself in a criminal case or deprive him of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

The suggestion that common prayer in the schools is a violation of the First Amendment rests entirely on the assumption that such procedures are ventures in the establishment of a state religion. In 1962, ministers, priests, and rabbis in New York City agreed on the formulation of a school prayer, to wit, "Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee and beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country."

If that is an unconstitutional venture in the establishment of religion, then a note by an 18-year-old to his teacher ending with "Love, Al" is a contractually enforceable offer of marriage.

Everybody knows that such common prayer as is proscribed in *Engel* v. *Vitale* (1962) is as far removed from establishmentarianism as a valentine is from a marriage contract. However, sectarian ideologists were on the march, and they have paralyzed the thinking of many Americans, including a few dozen senators who would otherwise pass constitutional intelligence tests.

—The other argument has to do with the "imposition" on the minority of a prayer constructed by the majority. The idea is that it violates the conscience of the 14-year-old to pronounce sentiments with which he is uncomfortable.

That argument is brewed in the fever swamps of multiculturalism. In the first place, the student in the public school does not live by such preciousness as occupies the time of PhDs in etymology. In the second place, it is preposterous to assume that policy in schools should be circumscribed by conceivable objections from potential minorities. As a practical matter, the Jewish/Christian problem is as easily solved as by avoiding any mention of Jesus.

Short of that, the best lesson to teach the idiosyncratic minority is that the majority has certain rights, and even as Public School 81 has the right to assemble a cheering squad to exult over the school's basketball team, the majority should have the right to say something pleasant to God when school assembles in the morning.

Senator Jesse Helms has been correctly admonished in the last few days for publicly questioning the suitability of the man elected by the American people to serve as Commander-in-Chief. If the minority has certain rights, so does the minority when it grows into majority. Contrary arguments are spinach, and the hell with them. □

Life under S-1

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 29

Facing two hundred guests who dominate political thinking in Washington, Bob Dole promised that the bill to be designated S-1 will confront head on the whole business of mandated but non-financed federal ventures. And of course Senator Dole had in mind what was on the mind of so many, namely Proposition 187. There was something for everyone in what Senator Dole said. Those who worry about medicine and schooling for immigrants sensed that S-1 would take care of that problem, i.e, the money would materialize. And those associated with the Proposition felt they'd been vindicated: It is not the business of the Federal Government, they were saying, to spend Californian money on projects that originate in Congress or happen to appeal to the Supreme Court.

But S-1 does not really provide much relief. The reason is that there is no such thing as money that flows out of a federal well, yet that superstition is the most basic in the mismanagement of liberal economic thinking.

This was highly relevant in 1989 when the great earthquake hit San Francisco and six to seven billion dollars were infused into the state in the form of relief. For Californians those dollars felt very much like pennies from heaven, and certainly there was a net subsidy there. But during that fiscal season, for every dollar that California received from Washington, D.C., it was sending in $1.25. California, in other words, is a state that lies above the "parity line," whereas Massachusetts, for instance, is a state exactly at parity: one dollar to Washington? One dollar from Washington. Taxes per capita? $5,335.

Political forces tend to line up to preserve a state from extra impositions. Thus Governor William Weld of Massachusetts said on *Meet the Press*, "If they [the Federal Government] say, 'Pay for all benefits for people who are in your state illegally,' that's cockeyed." It would be cockeyed if more illegals were in your state than elsewhere. Otherwise, the burden would, in the case of Massachusetts, be exactly equal: one more dollar paid out for federal welfare, one more dollar sent back for federal welfare.

Now S-1, though perhaps prompted by the pressures generated by Proposition 187, is much more broadly directed. The idea is to take on, e.g., the environmentalists, the special-interest groups for the handicapped, whatever.

Suppose that S-1 were passed and the environmentalists a few months later ruled that the permissible emission of particulates from a gasoline engine would be tightened, from (the numbers are imaginary) 0.003 to 0.001. Since the consumption of fuel is universal, its impact isn't on the order of the impact of illegal immigrants, not a problem in South Dakota. But if S-1 takes on the responsibility of returning to each state the cost of compliance with the new law, then how should a resident of, say, Connecticut react to S-1? Connecticut pays $1.36 for every federal dollar got back. Accordingly, a general tax raised to reimburse individual states would cost Connecticut one-third more than it would spend if it used its own money to meet the provisions of the new law.

The most munificent state, by this standard, is New Hampshire. Residents of New Hampshire send $1.60 to Washington for every dollar received. Thus, using round figures, if S-1 called for reimbursing New Hampshire $10 million, the government would levy against New Hampshire $16 million.

At the low end of the scale we find West Virginia, which sends fifty cents to Washington and gets back one dollar plus Senator Byrd. Nothing contemplated under S-1 could conceivably hurt West Virginians, who ride so happily on the high point in the graph that records tax commerce between individual states and the Federal Government.

It is then a major delusion, the idea that the Federal Government can, at no cost to the states, finance any particular cost or extravagance. The charts documenting the flow of money in and out should be incandescently displayed on the floor of both Houses when the debate is joined. If the idea is that the citizens of New Hampshire should put up more money for the benefit of the citizens of West Virginia, they have a right to know what it is that's going on, under the shelter of S-1. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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MIS.MIS

"MIS.MIS" is computerese for "Miscellaneous Misanthrope," the disk file where I store the incipient thoughts I jot down while eating dinner, watching TV, or brooding. The list-making season is now upon us, and so, in lieu of New Year's Resolutions, I wrote up the file.

■ Permissiveness and liberalism are ever linked. I spotted Rudolph Giuliani for a weak-sister Republican the moment I saw the way he let his son disrupt his inaugural address. That brat should be whipped until his nose bleeds buttermilk.

■ For whom the Bell Curve tolls: Feminists are worried that Charles Murray will follow his study in black and white with one on male and female IQ differences. Let the geniuses fall where they may; I'm glad my IQ is only 126. If it were higher I would like math and science, and I don't want to. An IQ in the 120s is as convenient as wearing a B-cup bra: anything larger or smaller spells trouble.

■ Caveat Creep: Rush Limbaugh's TV show now has a dress code requiring "skirts and dresses for ladies." I haven't owned a dress since 1970. I spent the Fifties in high heels, girdles, wired bras (32B), and waist pinchers called "Merry Widows." I earned my stripes—literally—and now I intend to stay happily unbound and trousered. I would remind traditionalists that the flowing, bell-bottomed pants suits of the Seventies were quite elegant. Moreover, pants cover a woman far more modestly than the skimpy thigh-highs that pass for dresses today. If you doubt it, watch Jane Wallace on *Equal Time* or Marcia Clark on *O. J. Simpson*. The views stop just short of Van Diemen's Land. The only difference is that Marcia Clark has good legs.

■ An aspect of sexual harassment that no one, to my knowledge, has considered is "shop talk." Something about laboring in the same vineyard reduces sexual tension between men and women and replaces it with an oddly chaste camaraderie. When I began working with men in publishing, I quickly learned the paradoxical lesson that sex isn't sexy. The loftily named "editorial conference" more often than not consists of "Is there a synonym for clitoris?" and "They go to bed in chapter five," uttered with the serene detachment of medieval copyists working on the Psalter.

I think Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill really did discuss Long Dong Silver and the hair on the Coke—as shop talk that Miss Hill later twisted and used as a weapon. The hair on the Coke is from *The Exorcist*, a novel that pitted enraged church groups against defenders of the First Amendment's protection of blasphemy, but incredibly, both of these lawyers claimed they didn't read it. After Thomas so testified, he quickly and needlessly added, "I saw a clip from the movie, the part where the bed moved." Shakespeare would have loved that compulsive little slip. I believe both of them read *The Exorcist*, and if I know anything about shop talk I'll bet that the hair on the Coke was a running joke for weeks.

Orrin Hatch revealed that a case involving the porn movie *Long Dong Silver* was filed in the Western District, making it more likely that the Oklahoma-based Hill, rather than the Easterner Thomas, would have known about it. Thus, Hatch suggested, she used her knowledge of the case to invent a prurient conversation and then accused Thomas of initiating it. In the ensuing either–or debate no one stopped to think that the two might have had a conversation about Long Dong Silver that wasn't at all prurient.

■ Instead of nominating Clarence Thomas, George Bush should have renominated Robert Bork and resigned the Presidency in the face of a second rejection. It was the only honorable thing to do, but white plumes don't wear well in democracies.

■ Incidentally, if Thomas is such a conservative, what was he doing working at EEOC? I'd rather dynamite it.

■ I have been in an irritable mood ever since Vatican II. A Protestant expects the Catholic Church to act like the Catholic Church the way a woman expects a man to act like a man.

■ In my student days nobody talked about school prayer per se; it was simply part of the decorous rite called "Opening School" whose benefits were clearly secular. Ritual and ceremony develop the habit of doing the same thing at the same time in the same way, inculcating over time an orderly, systematic approach to everyday life. This is something that children from today's hectic homes need desperately. I see a definite connection between Opening School and my undeviating routine before leaving the house: I stand in front of the stove, checking each burner and intoning, "Off, off, off, off." If religious conservatives promoted school prayer as a way of training kids to pull themselves together, instead of insisting that prayer means praying, the GOP would be a lot better off.

■ The ultimate measure of American ignorance is the one-word headline WHY? that we put on dire news. Next comes TRYING TO UNDERSTAND, followed by HOW COULD IT HAPPEN?, followed by A TOWN WITHOUT ANSWERS, followed by a special with Connie Chung, who keeps her brow furrowed for half an hour. Perplexity on this scale bespeaks our preference for education over learning. The legions of ribbon-tying hysterics pole-axed by the Susan Smith infanticide could benefit from exposure to Euripides' *Medea*, but Americans believe any amount of learning is a dangerous thing. The egalitarian Left says it isn't "relevant" and the philistine Right says, "It won't help you make a living." Probably not, but it makes life livable.

■ I'm not prejudiced, I'm "postjudiced." Postjudice is the compliment that common sense pays to experience.

■ Never look on the bright side; the glare is blinding. —FLORENCE KING

St. Martin's will publish The Florence King Reader, *an anthology, on January 14.*

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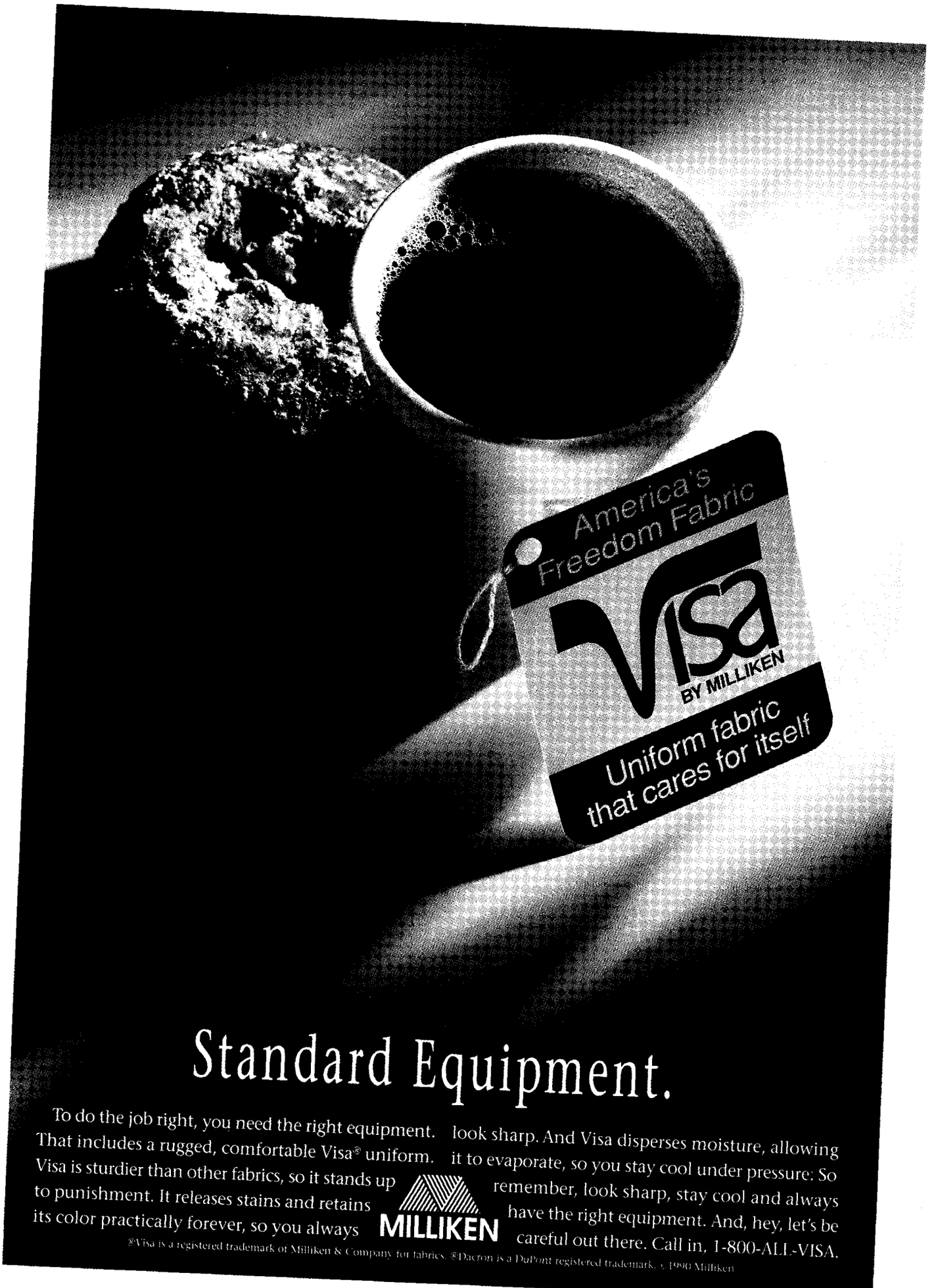

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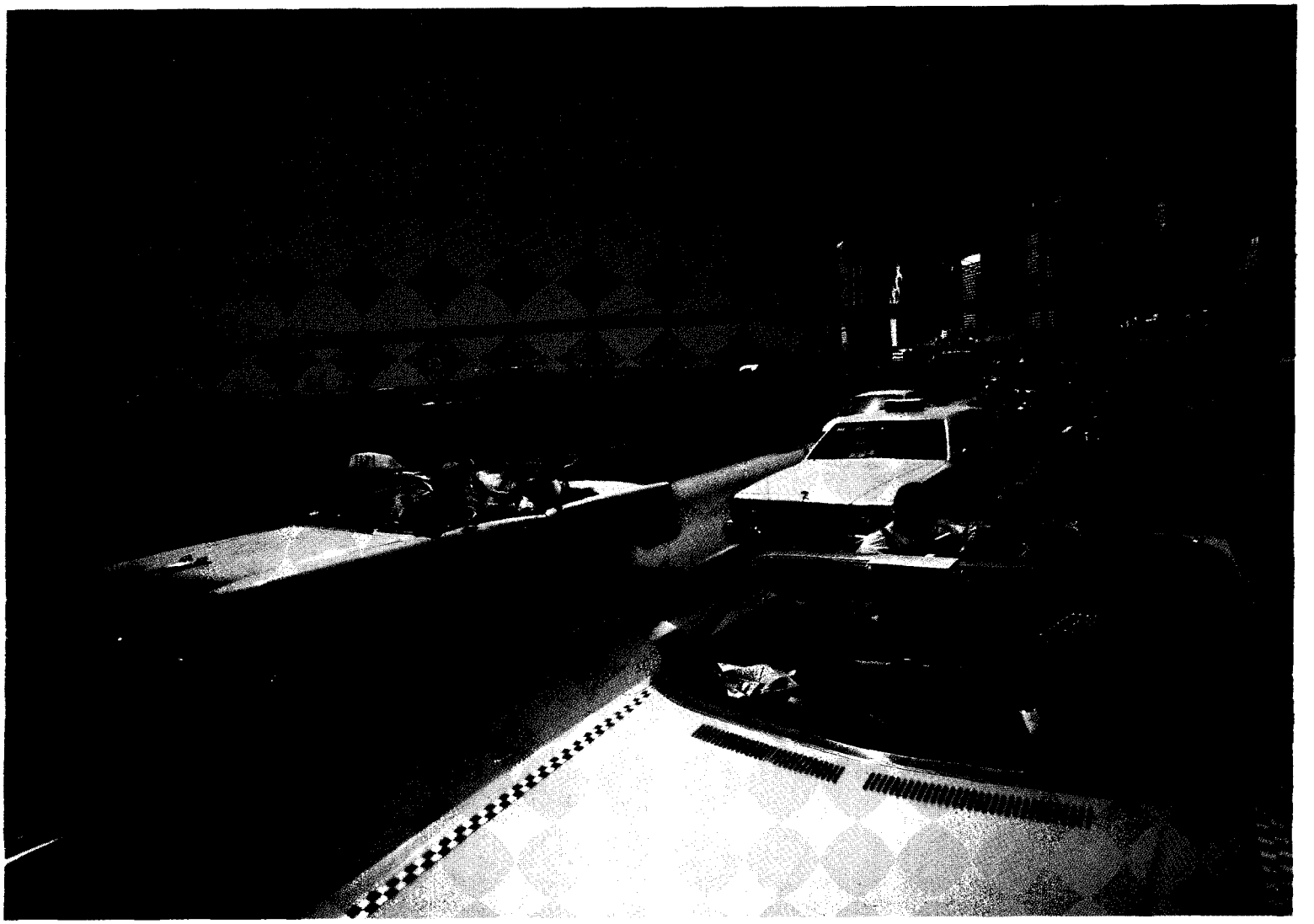

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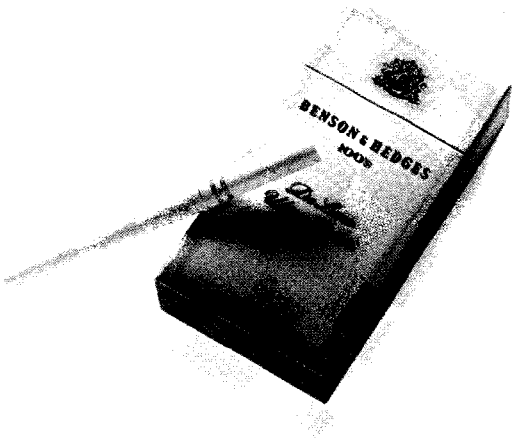
5 mg "tar," 0.4 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.



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